

ALL-COLOR winter photo gallery p. 60 **GG1 vs. RDC** p. 32

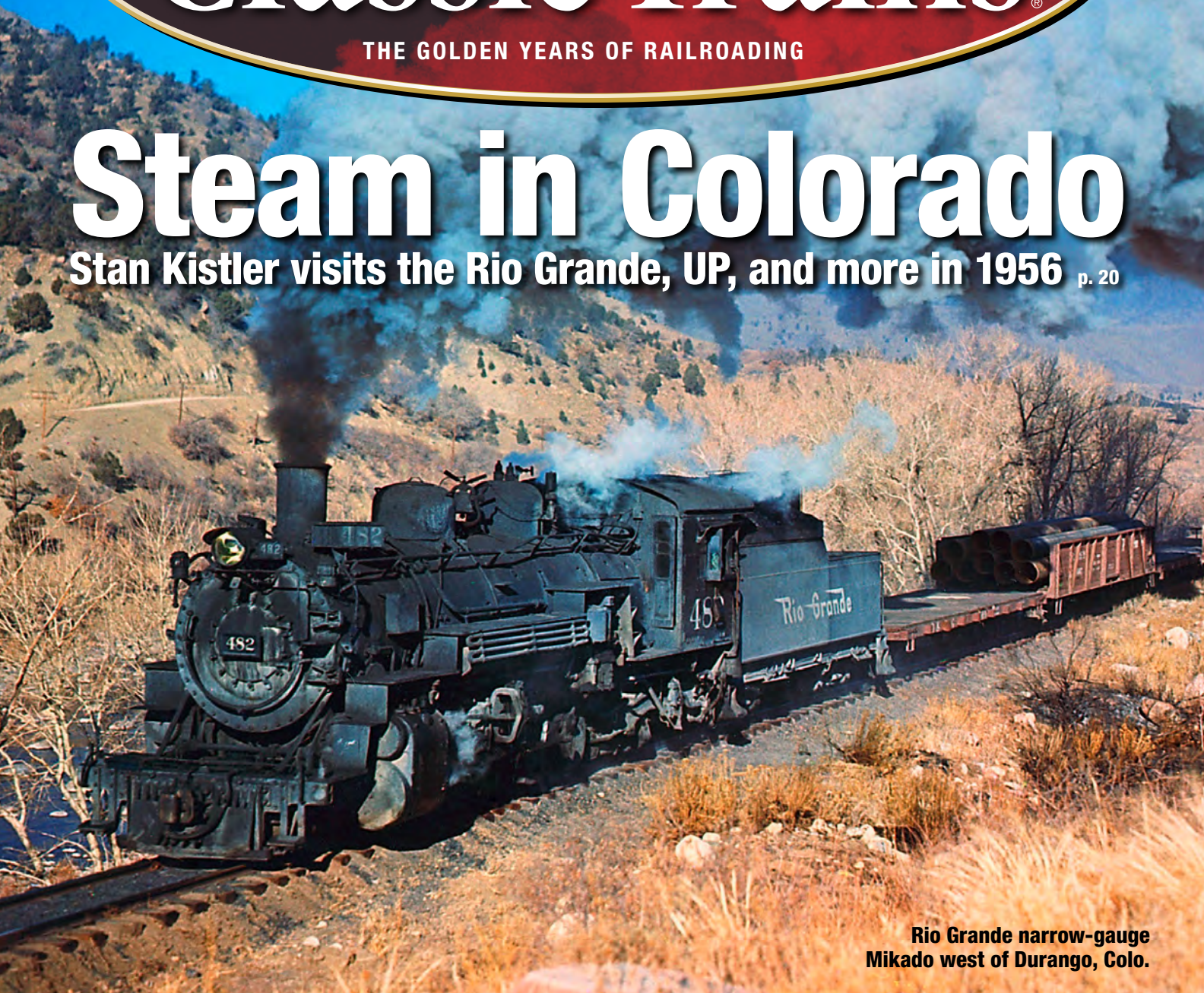
Classic Trains®

Winter 2014

THE GOLDEN YEARS OF RAILROADING

Steam in Colorado

Stan Kistler visits the Rio Grande, UP, and more in 1956 p. 20



Rio Grande narrow-gauge
Mikado west of Durango, Colo.

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Santa Fe's Arizona line change p. 66

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NYC's Harmon Shops p. 58 • **CP's man of steam** p. 52

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RAILROADING'S FINEST HOUR

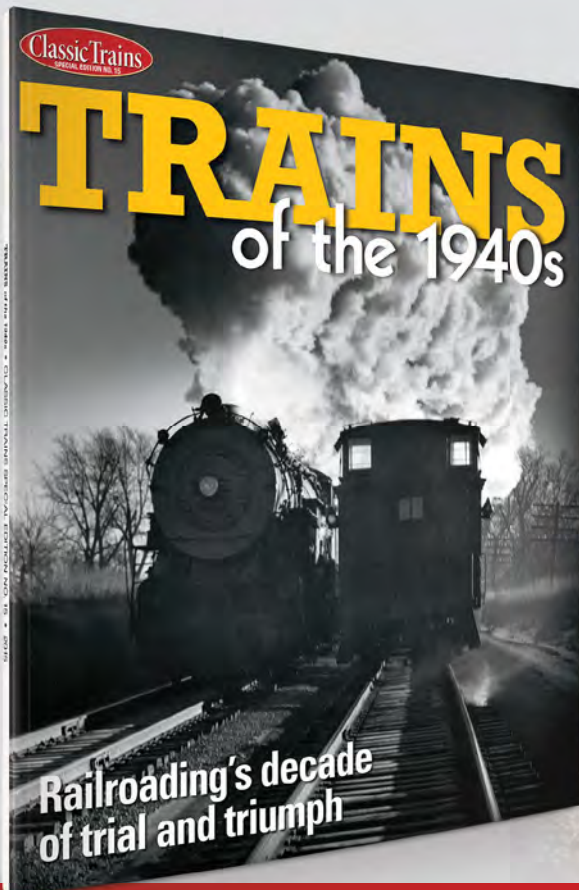
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 Graphic Designer **Drew Halverson**
 Editorial Assistant **Diane Laska-Swanke**
 Contributing Illustrator **Bill Metzger**
 Librarian **Thomas E. Hoffmann**
 Publisher **Diane M. Bacha**

Editorial

Phone: (262) 796-8776
 E-mail: editor@classictrainsmag.com
 Fax: (262) 798-6468
 P.O. Box 1612
 Waukesha, WI 53187-1612

Display Advertising sales

Phone: (888) 558-1544, ext. 625
 E-mail: adsales@classictrainsmag.com
 Fax: (262) 796-0126

Customer service

Phone: (800) 533-6644
 Outside U.S. and Canada: (262) 796-8776, ext. 421
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WELCOME

John Gruber: right man for the times



Southern's most famous 2-8-2 enters New Albany, Ind., during the 1966 journey so memorably chronicled by writer David P. Morgan and photographer John Gruber in *Locomotive 4501*.

Kevin Keefe's profile of John Gruber [page 40] emphasizes John's role as an innovator who brought an unconventional energy to rail photography. When John's work first appeared in TRAINS, it was shocking to some readers. By the time I started reading the magazine in April 1966, John was an established presence in its pages. As a child unaware of the "rules" John was "breaking," I accepted his bold, imaginative compositions as valid interpretations of the dynamic world around me.

Soon my December 1966 issue arrived, with Editor David P. Morgan's "I Could Write a Book" essay about Southern 2-8-2 4501's first big trip, illustrated with John's photos. When the book that DPM had promised came out, the photographer's bond with the 4501 was cemented for good. By chance, our tribute to him coincides with the return of the beloved Mikado to excursion service after a multi-year overhaul.

John's work extends well beyond the 4501, of course, and even beyond the making of photographs. Kevin's article covers this, including John's editorship of the magazine *Vintage Rails*, which set a high standard for CLASSIC TRAINS to match when we launched it after VR's closure in 1999. Thanks, John, for all your good work.

Robert S. McGonigal
 Editor

Schedule change: a three-week shift

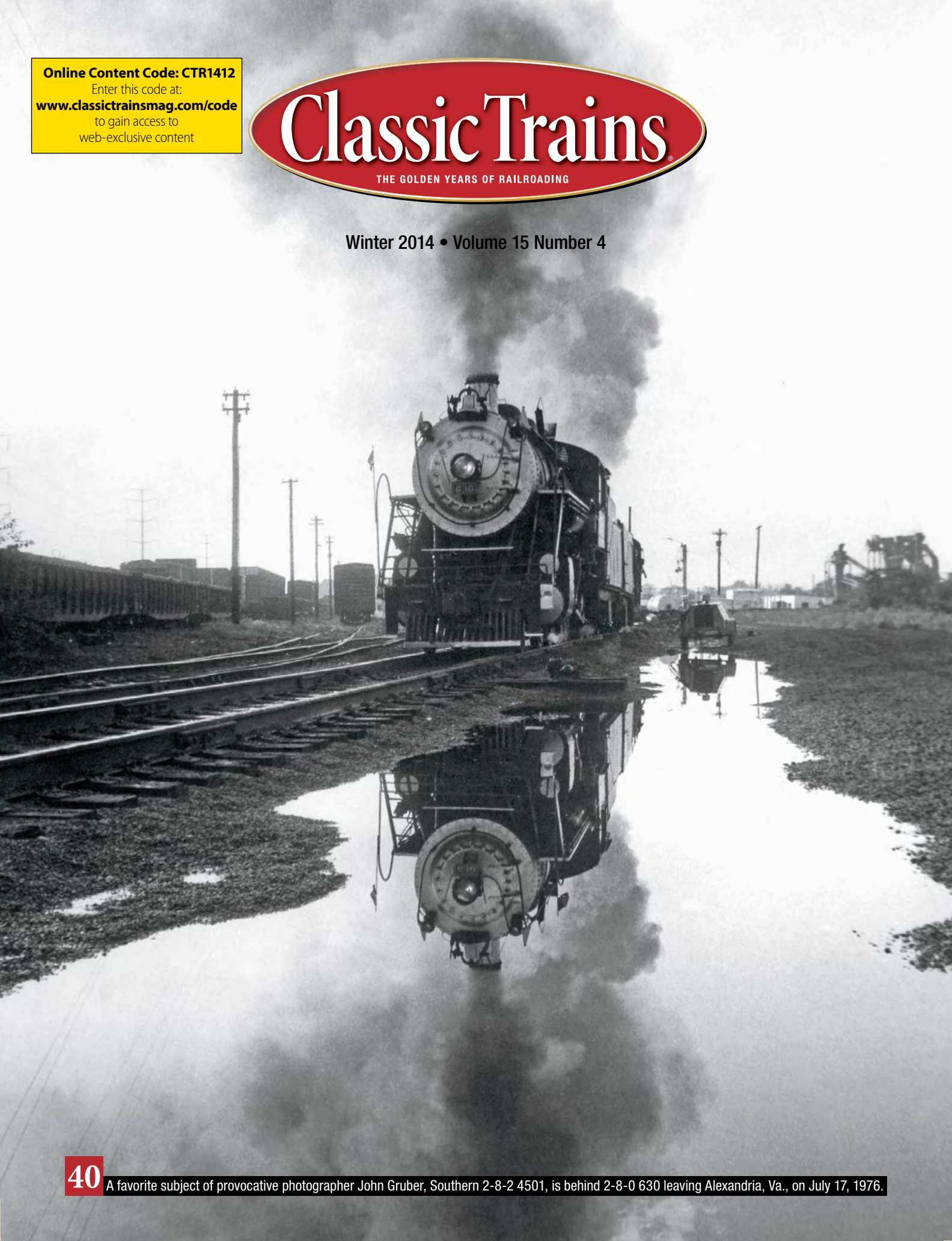
Railroads warned their passengers that the listings in their public timetables were "Subject to change without notice." Not us. We're letting you know now that our next issue, Spring 2015, will be in stores and your mailboxes on or about February 24, three weeks later than on our previous publishing schedule. The issue after that, Summer 2015, will be out May 26, and so on. This schedule shift is anticipated to have positive effects on the distribution of both CLASSIC TRAINS and our sister magazine, TRAINS.

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Classic Trains

THE GOLDEN YEARS OF RAILROADING

Winter 2014 • Volume 15 Number 4



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On the cover: Rio Grande K-36 narrow-gauge 2-8-2 No. 482 leads a pipe extra — bound from Durango to Farmington, N.Mex. — through Carbon Junction, Colo., on November 23, 1956. For photographer Stan Kistler, it was a concluding exclamation point to his 31-day odyssey (see page 20).

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In northern Colorado, the Harriman standard

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A 1,540-mile trip began and ended on Southern

52



CPR’s Frank Bunker exemplified The Engineer

66



New way for the Santa Fe in northern Arizona

William P. "Bill" Diven ["Classics Today: By Rail to the Grand Canyon," page 74] grew up a short bike ride from the Burlington Route's station at Oregon, Ill., and moved as a teen to Las Cruces, N.Mex., and an easy pedal to the Santa Fe Railway's "Horny Toad" line to El Paso, Texas. He now lives northeast of Albuquerque. A veteran print and broadcast journalist, he has contributed to *TRAINS* magazine since 1974, but this is his first *CLASSIC TRAINS* byline.

Steve Glischinski ["Fallen Flags Remembered: Tracks of the Black Bear," page 16], a St. Paul, Minn., native, began taking train photos at age 13. He has organized numerous rail excursions and photo charters, dating from the 1970s and including the current every-other-year Railfan Weekend at the Lake Superior Railroad Museum in Duluth. He is the author of several books, his latest being *Minnesota Railroads, A Photographic History 1940-2012*, published by University of Minnesota Press. Steve lives in Shoreview, Minn., with his wife Lori and son Andy. This is his tenth article in *CLASSIC TRAINS*.

J. David Ingles ["Long Way Home for Christmas," page 34], *CLASSIC TRAINS'* Senior Editor since its inception, and who served on *TRAINS'* editorial staff 1971–2007, raids his extensive slide files each issue for an "Ingles Color Classics" entry. Beginning in 1958, he has ridden intercity trains (including excursions) into and/or out of St. Louis Union Station on 16 different routes under the auspices of 13 railroads. The station, opened in 1894, at its height served 22 railroads (most in the world for a single terminal), and in the 1940s handled 100,000 passengers a day. Amtrak used it until October 1978. Renovated in 1985 and again in 2010, it houses a hotel, restaurant, and shopping complex.

Kevin P. Keefe ["Provocateur of Railroad Photography," page 40] was 14 years old in July 1965 and convalescing at home after a brief illness when his mother went to a local newsstand



and brought home a revelation: his first issue of *TRAINS* magazine. The August '65 edition's cover story was John Gruber's photo essay on Chicago Union Station. "The trains from my town arrived in Chicago at La Salle Street Station, so CUS was unknown to me," Kevin recalls. "John's beautiful images were a great way to become acquainted with a great railroad terminal, and a great magazine." Kevin was Editor of *TRAINS* 1992–2000, and now is Kalmbach's Vice President, Editorial, as well as a Director of the Center for Railroad Photography & Art. The photo of him at his hometown Niles (Mich.) station is by Greg McDonnell.

Peter A. Keller ["NYC's Home for Electrics," page 58], is a retired engineer who worked 38 years for Tektronix. He grew up within sight of NYC's Harlem Division 6 miles from Harmon during the late steam and early diesel era. Peter is the author of two hardcover books on cathode-ray tube history and electro-optics, plus numerous technical and historical magazine articles, the latest being a detailed history of Harmon station published by the New York Cen-

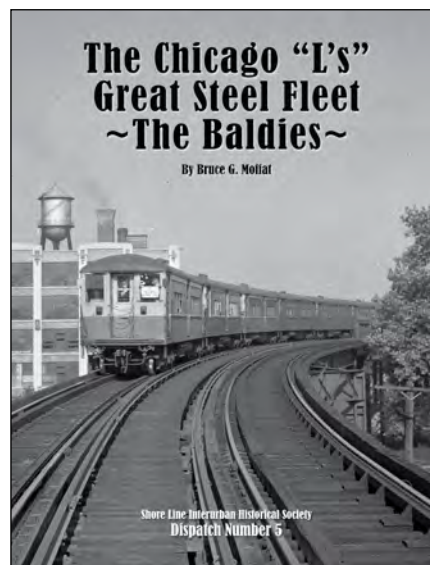
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tral System Historical Society. Peter and his wife Irene reside in Aloha, Ore.; this is his first byline in *CLASSIC TRAINS*. He thanks Larry Faulkner for his help with identification of structures.

Stan Kistler

["Steam Autumn," page 20], the dean of California rail photographers, is retired from a 55-year career in photography and graphic arts. Hundreds of his photos have appeared in numerous publications since the late '40s. Stan, who now lives in Grass Valley, Calif., with his wife Barbara, was the subject of our first "Great Photographers" article, in Spring 2000, our first issue. This portrait of him dates from 1960, four years after his epic trip around the West.



Jerry A. Pinkepank ["What's in a Photograph?" page 50] has had a long career as a railroad officer and, since 1989, a Seattle-based rail consultant. Since the

early 1960s, Jerry has authored dozens of articles for *TRAINS* and, since 2004, *CLASSIC TRAINS*. He is the principal contributor to our "What's in a Photograph?" series, launched in Spring 2014.

Jim Shaughnessy

["Frank Bunker, a Man of Steam," page 52], the award-winning veteran photographer and author, has contributed a "Shaughnessy Files" photo feature to virtually every issue of *CLASSIC TRAINS* since the Fall 2007 issue, plus "Fallen Flags Remembered" entries on two of his favorite roads, Delaware & Hudson and Rutland, both of which were the subjects of major books by him. He was our Fall 2001 issue's "Great Photographer." Jim and his wife Carol still live in Troy, N.Y., overlooking the Hudson River valley. In this recent photo, he looks at the book of his photos, *The Call of Trains*, published by W. W. Norton in 2008.



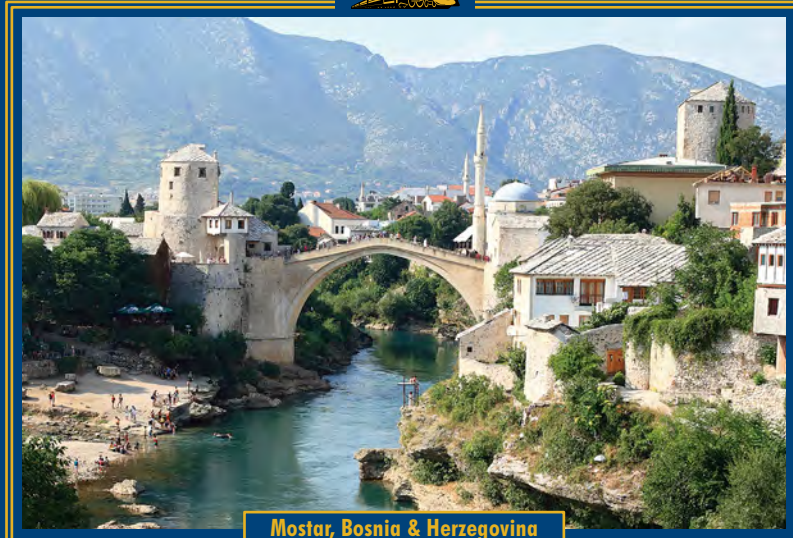
Donald Sims

["Santa Fe's 1 Percent Decision," page 66] grew up in northern New Jersey, moved to California with his family in 1943 when he was 15, and now lives in Missoula, Mont. A talented, widely published photographer who traveled often with the late Richard Steinheimer, Don wrote several major features for *TRAINS* in the late 1950s and early '60s, but this is his first article in *CLASSIC TRAINS*. He was the subject of a "Great Photographers" story in our Spring 2004 issue. He's pictured in Utah in a 1955 photo by his wife Reva.



J. W. Swanberg ["Strange Bedfellows," page 32] is a widely published author, photographer, and New Haven Railroad historian. Jack is retired from a career that began on the NH and ended on Metro-North. This is his eighth byline in a *CLASSIC TRAINS* publication. ■

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The Santa Fe's premier streamliner gets an unusual assist in frigid Kansas weather



Obscured by blowing steam, the normally diesel-powered *Super Chief* forges west through a gale at Syracuse, Kans., after a snowstorm in March 1948. Photographer William O. Gibson related that, because diesels' steam generators were subject to failure in sub-zero cold, 4-8-2 No. 3720 and 4-8-4 No. 3756 were put on the *Super*. Even so, he said the streamliner's last five cars were frozen.



CLASSIC TRAINS collection

Double bedroom to nowhere

Pullman introduced the double bedroom in 1930. The accommodation featured a sofa by day, two berths by night, and in-room sink and toilet; walls between rooms could be opened to create a suite. Here a businessman enjoys a double bedroom as his train passes cows wading in a stream. But what's with the C-clamp and work lights above him? The rough framing at the end of the sofa where the corridor wall should be? And who's the guy in the mirror? This is a mock-up, built to show the features of the new room.



Bob Krone

The case for yellow cabs

The little red caboose of old is as much a part of railroad lore as Casey Jones and cowcatchers. As paint technology advanced, some roads tried other colors. Surely yellow was best for visibility, as on these Raritan River hacks at South Amboy, N.J., in 1957, which outshine the red SW900 beyond.

Songs of the rails

A new CD of folk music celebrates rail-roading's rich traditions. *Tracks*, by singer-songwriter Anne Hills, contains 13 evocative songs with titles like "I Rode 'Em All, Man," "Transcontinental," and "Fallen Flag." Most were written by Hills; among the others is Steve Goodman's classic "City of New Orleans." Learn more at annehills.com.



75 years of great railroad writing

TRAINS magazine will turn 75 in 2015. To mark the milestone, Kalmbach Books has published *Great American Railroad Stories*, a collection of 51 articles from across TRAINS' history. Hard- and soft-cover editions are in bookstores and at kalmbachstore.com.



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More from Stan Kistler

See more photos by Stan Kistler from his epic 1956 tour of the West in search of steam.



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Norfolk & Western In Transition: 1952-1960 most around Batavia, OH by Don Jamieson. Lots of dead engines on locals, but also last J on the "Arrow", 611 in service, Jawn Henry, visits to Portsmouth and Williamson, plus 1959 fantrip with 1240 and 2174, and more. 67 Min. \$29.95



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Recalling the Hoosier Line

I thoroughly enjoyed the fine feature, “Breaking Away, in the Monon Manner” [pages 66-75, Fall CT]. It brought back fond memories of waving good-bye to my mother as she boarded the Monon as she journeyed to Milwaukee to visit her grandmother. It wasn’t until I finished the article, however, that I noticed that the author was William Benning Stewart, a school classmate of mine many years ago. I remember Bill’s enthusiastic interest and knowledge in all things pertaining to Indiana railroading. His main interest, as I recall, was the Indiana Railroad, and he had plans for a model railroad layout featuring this once extensive interurban system.

Vivid is my memory of the afternoon Bill’s father gained us entrance to the Big Four yards at Avon, where we watched the hump and switching operations with interest. Both of Bill’s parents were wonderful and gracious people. After high school we went our separate ways, and I have seen him only a couple of times since, but some of that rail enthusiasm of his must have rubbed off because here I am 50 years later with an N-scale model railroad module and an obscene amount of rolling stock. Thanks for the memories, Bill, and don’t forget our 50th high school reunion is next year.

Bob Parsons, Indianapolis, Ind.

I grew up 9 miles from Gosport, Ind., and the Monon in the late 1940s and early ’50s, so Stewart’s story stirred up memories. Sorry to say, I could have ridden my bicycle to Gosport but did not, so my memories are confined to the whistles that I could hear from my upstairs window on some nights.

John Lee, Perrysburg, Ohio

I rode the Monon a few times between Chicago’s Dearborn Station and Rennselaer, Ind., where I was a student at St. Joseph College in the early ’50s. One afternoon some of us were walking around town and wound up at the station. The agent was friendly, telling us about the railroad. He had orders for an approaching freight, and as he prepared them, he explained to us how the order fork worked. I was fascinated to see the crew snag the orders. This was 60-plus years ago, but I remember feeling the platform vibrate as the diesels thundered by, only about 4 or 5 yards from me.

Robert Jones, Ephrata, Pa.



CN’s Steve Hrenyk runs the 6060 at 70 mph.

Ken Hojnacki

Making like 70

I enjoyed reading old friend Bill Metzger’s “The Way It Was” piece on chasing Canadian National 6060 in 1976 [“Nothing Could Be Finer Than to Fool Around Spadina in the Morning,” pages 80-81]. I was the regular fireman on the Arcade & Attica tourist train, and that helped my wife and me get a ride on 6060 from Hamilton to Niagara Falls, Ont., on August 20, 1977. Bill wondered how fast 6060 was moving, and I can say that somewhere around Grimsby, the speedometer read 70 mph but the 4-8-2 rode like it was floating on air. The photo above, just west of Grimsby, shows engineer Steve Hrenyk all smiles as 6060 flew toward Niagara Falls.

Ken Hojnacki, Madison, Wis.

Tacoma–Seattle on Milwaukee

The “Bird’s-Eye View” of Seattle’s King Street and Union stations [pages 64-65], by Jerry A. Pinkepank, was great, but some clarification is required regarding Milwaukee Road’s trackage and electrification. From Tacoma Junction in Tacoma north to Black River Junction, the electrified track was jointly owned by the Union Pacific and the Milwaukee, which did the maintenance and dispatching. From Black River Junction to Argo interlocking, UP had its own non-electrified track, while Milwaukee had trackage rights on the electrified double track of subsidiary Pacific Coast Railroad. At Argo, UP and MILW passenger trains entered UP’s electrified double track to

Union Station. Today, the freight house area to the right (south) of King Street is the site of Seattle’s football and baseball stadiums.

Bob Butler, Phoenix, Ariz.

Green Mountain saga

Offering corrections to an article on the Rutland by Jim Shaughnessy [“Green Mountain Saga,” pages 16-19, as “Fallen Flags Remembered”] is like offering corrections to a story by Hemingway, but a few items are worthy of mention.

The L1-class 4-8-2s did not help on the 1951 dieselization down payments, as they weren’t sold for scrap until 1955. The Rutland’s modernization between August 1954 and April 1957 included 426 cars: 351 PS-1 40-foot boxcars, 15 PS-2 covered hoppers, and 25 PS-5 gondolas, all new, plus 35 steel gondolas from Norfolk & Western in 1953. Two wide-vision cabooses came from International Car in 1959. When the Rutland was struck in 1961, after the one-year cooling off period there was a strike vote, and it was treated as a second strike action. It was prolonged owing to the national unions not wanting local concessions to set a precedent nationally. In the end, Rutland was sold and parted out for over \$7 million in asset sales by 1967.

The old Ogdensburg & Lake Champlain west end, bought in 1965 by Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority, was not operated by Vermont Rail System until 2002. Prior to that, it was run by various entities under OPBA contract.

Phillip Blancher, Rutland Railroad Historical Society, Ogdensburg, N.Y.

Tales of the Bel-Del

I was pleasantly surprised to see John Harmon’s “Bel-Del doodlebug” [pages 52-55], and even more surprised when I realized the man in a suit with his back to the camera in the lead photo on the Trenton platform was my Uncle Blair Snyder. A draftsman/designer for the C. V. Hill Refrigeration Co., he commuted daily from Frenchtown to Trenton on the Bel-Del. He was probably among the “about 10 passengers” on the train north of Lambertville when the author rode what we called “the Dinky.”

Years earlier, my father, Paul Snyder, commuted from Frenchtown to Trenton on the Bel-Del to attend Rider College, and before that, my grandfather was a PRR telegrapher on the Bel-Del. I grew up along the Bel-Del 3 miles south of



Frenchtown and can remember as many as six passenger trains a day, plus freights, all pulled by steam. The line had a

shortline feel. More than once an engineer stopped his train by our farm to buy a basket of lima beans from my dad's gardens, and a friendly trainman regularly tossed bundles of already-read magazines to my neighbor's elderly father.

This wasn't my first "personal" CLASSIC TRAINS moment. The Summer 2007 issue's cover featured Boy Scouts at the 1957 National Jamboree taking a day trip from Valley Forge to Philadelphia. The gang in the photo was my George Washington Council troop. I easily identified several of the leaders and boys, and, although obscured, I'm in the photo too!

John Snyder, Middletown, N.Y.

In the early 1960s the Bel-Del was an important link on Pennsy's new hotshot Chicago-Boston *Yankee Trailer-Jet* piggyback trains, which ran from Trenton to Belvidere, N.J., then Lehigh & Hudson River to Maybrook, N.Y., and on to the New Haven. A convoluted route, yes, but it returned truck traffic to the rails until mergers eliminated lines east of Trenton.

Paul Kutta, West Chester, Pa.

Lehigh Valley's late-night sleeper service out of New York to Buffalo was not the *Owl* [page 52] but *The Star*, No. 11, leaving at 11:50 p.m., arriving Bethlehem at 1:54 a.m., and departing at 2:15. The *Owl* was New Haven's Boston-New York sleeper service, trains 2 and 3.

Alden H. Dreyer, Shelburne, Mass.

Remembering Bob Janz

I was saddened to read of the passing of Robert A. "Bob" Janz ["Head End," page 9], whom I met at a hobby shop in Chicago in 1957 when I was a young yardman on the Rock Island; I lost track of him after 1965. I appreciated his Chicago & North Western stories in CT.

William Meyer, Vernon Hills, Ill.

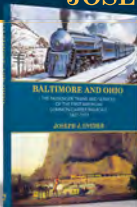
Hearts are still in San Francisco

Having grown up in the Bay Area as did Fred Matthews in the 1940s and '50s, I could relate to his fine "East Bay Rails" [pages 20-29]. I recall pulling into the ferry slip at the Oakland "Mole" and seeing that beautiful Southern Pacific

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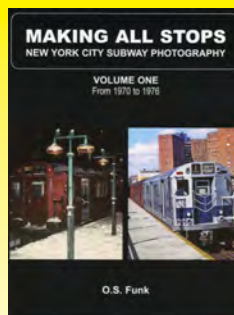
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FAST MAIL

stained-glass logo greeting us. The Mole was a fascinating place. I ventured there after returning from the service in the late '60s, and, while the tracks were gone, the shed remained. To my surprise, so did the stained-glass SP logo, which survived the wrecking ball and has a prominent place at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento.

I rescued a couple of items from the Mole on my last visit there years ago, one being this sign pointing to Track 6, still in my collection as

a memento of railroading's better days.

Bruce D. Quinn, Grand Rapids, Mich.

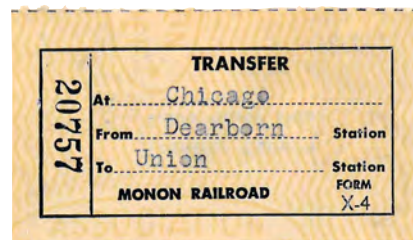


Growing up in San Francisco from 1943 onward, I missed a lot of East Bay action, but one of my few experiences there happened one Sunday afternoon when I was 7 or 8. We were on a "mystery trip," escorted blindfolded to and through the Ferry Building in the City. We took the ferry to the Oakland Mole, boarded a train of Harriman coaches, and rode to Lake Merritt, where we had a picnic and rowboat rides before returning to the City. I thought it was a sort of a commute train like those down the peninsula, but now I know it was an Oakland-Sacramento train.

Ken Marx, Fort Worth, Texas

Chicago transfers

I've been waiting for decades to learn what was behind Parmelee being replaced by Railroad Transfer Service in Chicago in the mid-1950s. Clifford Downey's interesting "Street Fight in Chicago" [pages 44-51] does a fine job explaining it all. Our family began making trips from Indiana cities to St. Paul Union Depot in December 1956, when I was 11. I made my first independent trip, from Frankfort, Ind., on Memorial Day 1958 via the Monon and Burlington.



Many more trips followed after high school in 1963 and continued until Amtrak left IC's Central Station in 1972. One step Downey did not mention was that the transfer coupon issued with the passenger's tickets was to be exchanged at the RTS counter upon arrival for a less formal paper ticket that was handed to the transfer driver. I learned about this when I skipped the RTS counter in Dearborn Station and tried to give my torn-out coupon to the driver of the only blue-and-white station wagon I saw. I was sent back for my official ticket. RTS accepted no cash fares.

The only coupon I have [facing page] remained with me because on one trip I went from Dearborn to Union by taxi owing to my connection being cut to 15 minutes by a late Monon *Thoroughbred*. That cost a few dollars but was faster, because we had no intermediate stops, which with RTS had become common.

Dennis C. Henry, Saint Peter, Minn.

The photos atop pages 50 and 51 purport to be from 1955, but on page 51, the station wagon at the right in the left photo

to is a 1958 Ford. In the right photo, the new limo might be a '57, but I believe it is also a '58. The earliest the two pictures could be is fall '57 when the next year's models were introduced.

Doug Lovett, Wilmington, Del.

Train-watching from Koppers

The photo by Stan Baker on pages 62-63 of C&NW's *Twin Cities 400* passing the Koppers Coke plant in March 1963 ["One Man's Minneapolis"] was taken three months before I began working there, first as a college summer job, but I stayed until December 1964, when I was drafted. After my tour of duty, I worked there another eight months before returning to Michigan to finish college.

I worked all aspects of the 2,300-degree, gas-fired ovens, seen above the cab windows of the leading E7. I also worked the plant's rails as a "brakeman" for the 0-6-0s' crews. Before I left, the 0-6-0s were replaced by a GE 80-ton center-cab unit. The ovens and the employee footbridge to the offices, visible in the distance, were great train-watching spots.

Steve Gabourie, Irvine, Calif.

Fall flubs

- Page 55: Dick Steinbrenner took the photo of Lehigh Valley's *John Wilkes*. Also, Wilmington & Western's preserved PRR doodlebug is 4662, not 4622.

- Page 61: Soo's *Winnipeg* made its first stop south of Manitoba, Canada, at Noyes, Minn. (not North Dakota).

- Page 76: Five Alco PA's survive — the key words "North American" were not in the NKP 190 caption. The other U.S. PA is in the museum at Frisco, Texas, and the other two ex-D&H units are in Mexico museums. The fifth is a broad-gauge Brazilian PA, also in a museum.

- Page 87: WCF&N bought three Perley Thomas cars from Knoxville, Tenn. (there is no Knoxville, Ky.). ■

Got a comment?

If you have a comment or correction, write us at Fast Mail, CLASSIC TRAINS, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612; e-mail: fastmail@classictrainsmag.com. Be sure to include your hometown and state. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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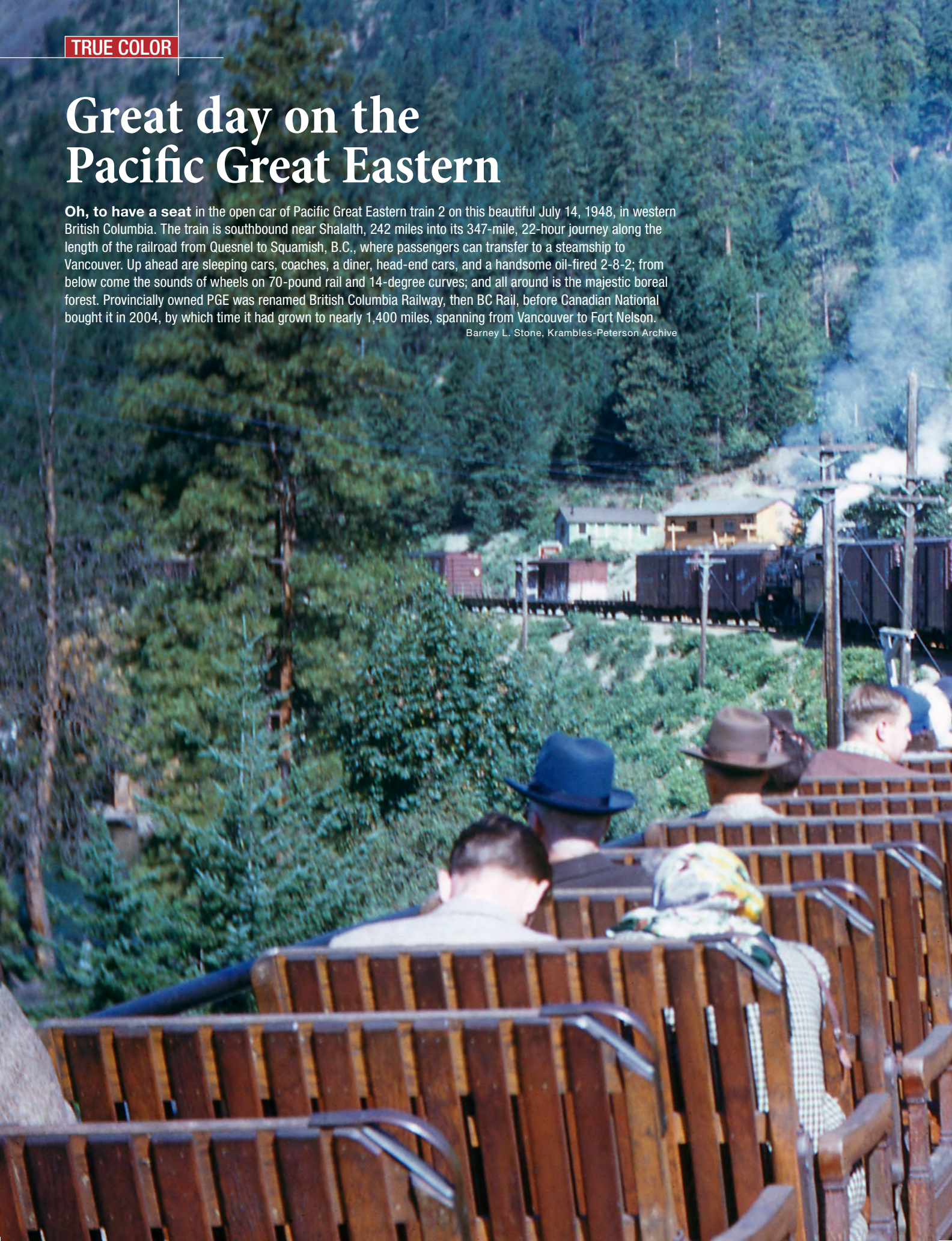
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TRUE COLOR

Great day on the Pacific Great Eastern

Oh, to have a seat in the open car of Pacific Great Eastern train 2 on this beautiful July 14, 1948, in western British Columbia. The train is southbound near Shalalth, 242 miles into its 347-mile, 22-hour journey along the length of the railroad from Quesnel to Squamish, B.C., where passengers can transfer to a steamship to Vancouver. Up ahead are sleeping cars, coaches, a diner, head-end cars, and a handsome oil-fired 2-8-2; from below come the sounds of wheels on 70-pound rail and 14-degree curves; and all around is the majestic boreal forest. Provincially owned PGE was renamed British Columbia Railway, then BC Rail, before Canadian National bought it in 2004, by which time it had grown to nearly 1,400 miles, spanning from Vancouver to Fort Nelson.

Barney L. Stone, Krambles-Peterson Archive





Tracks of the Black Bear

Algoma Central, with mining origins, served a remote region of Ontario • **By Steve Glischinski**



Algoma Central train No. 1 for Hearst, behind two Geeps, crosses the line's scenic highlight, the Montreal River trestle, on June 5, 1972.

Walter A. Peters; J. David Ingles collection

Certain railroads seem to have an aura of mystery about them, running through remote areas seldom visited by outsiders. Ontario's Algoma Central Railway (ACR), which ran from Sault Ste. Marie 296 miles north to Hearst, was one. Named for the region it served, Algoma Central passed through some of the most remote country in North America, including the famed Agawa Canyon.

The canyon is what brought ACR to most people's attention, and even today under Canadian National ownership, provincially subsidized trains carry trainloads of tourists from "the Soo" 114 miles north to the Agawa Canyon Wilderness Park, where during a layover they may disembark to take in the glories of the park the ACR helped develop. The only other access is by hiking trail.

Iron ore played an early role in the railroad's development. In the 1890s a gold boom near Wawa Lake, 140 miles north of the Soo, brought in prospectors, and in 1898 one discovered high-grade hematite ore in the area. Meanwhile, businessman Francis H. Clergue had arrived in Sault Ste. Marie in 1894 and began development of power plants to harness the flow of the St. Mary's River,

which links Lake Superior with Lake Huron. He went on to develop a pulp mill, streetcar systems in both Sault Ste. Marie (Ontario's and Michigan's), a ferry service, and a foundry and machine shop that could handle lakeboat and locomotive overhauls. These were controlled by Consolidated Lake Superior Co., a holding firm. When word of the ore deposit became known, Clergue moved to develop the Helen Mine at the new settlement of Wawa.

To move the ore, and to bring logs to the pulp mill, the Algoma Central Railway was incorporated August 11, 1899. Federal and provincial charters allowed the railroad to build from the Soo to the Canadian Pacific main line at Franz, 194 miles north, and to Michipicoten Harbor on Lake Superior. Since the harbor was just 12 miles from Wawa, the railroad built this isolated line first so the iron ore could be transferred to lakeboats. The ore went to Algoma Steel, another Clergue brainchild, which opened a steelworks on the west side of Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.; its main business was producing rails for several Canadian lines. Later, ACR would handle all-rail shipments of ore from Wawa to the Soo.

In 1901, Clergue acquired the charter

of the Ontario, Hudson Bay & Western, which intended to build a line north from the CPR main to Hudson Bay. The company then changed its name to Algoma Central & Hudson Bay Railway, anticipating a connection to a Hudson Bay port. That never materialized, and in 1965 the name reverted to Algoma Central Railway.

Construction from the Soo progressed slowly. By 1903, 56 miles had been built, and the line was used to take timber to the pulp mill. That year, however, Algoma Central fell victim to the bankruptcy of Clergue's Consolidated Lake Superior Co., and construction halted for six years. Work resumed in 1909, and by the end of 1911 the railroad had crossed the Montreal River at milepost 92 on a 1,550-foot-long, 130-foot-high curved trestle that remains the line's scenic highlight today.

A connection with the Michipicoten branch was realized in 1912 at Hawk Junction, and AC&HB reached both the CPR main at Franz and CNR predecessor Canadian Northern's line at Oba in the same year. AC&HB finally attained what would be its northern terminus, Hearst — where it connected with the National Transcontinental Railway — in



"Baggage" on ACR was varied, and important, as is evident at Hearst in 1951 (left). Spruce Haven Lodge (above) is a typical remote "station."

Left photo, A. C. Kalmbach; above, Russ Porter, J. David Ingles collection

1914. (Canadian Government Railways took over the NTR in 1915, and the newly named, government-owned Canadian National Railways took over Canadian Northern in 1918.)

Under the Ontario Land Grant Aid Act of 1900, and as a result of its commitment to build a railway, Algoma Central received more than 1.6 million acres of forestlands in the Algoma region north of Sault Ste. Marie. Grant conditions included an obligation to "maintain a Great Lakes fleet of four steel vessels of at least 2,000 tons carrying capacity."

In 1900, the directors of Consolidated Lake Superior Co. approved purchase of "four steam vessels to be used for freight and passenger service in connection with the company's railway." Operated as a division of ACR, the lakeboats became a familiar sight on the Great Lakes and remain so today, with their funnels wearing the "Black Bear" emblem the railroad introduced in the early 1900s. The logo first appeared on stationery and was applied to rolling stock beginning during World War II. On the sides of locomotives, the bear always faced forward.

From 2-8-0s to GP40s

For a railroad its size, ACR owned a variety of steam power. The first engines were secondhand, including 11 acquired in 1899: four Lehigh Valley 4-6-0s and seven ex-Chicago, Burlington & Quincy 0-4-0s. ACR's first new power, four Baldwin 2-8-0s, arrived in 1900, and two years later came two 0-6-0s from Canadian Locomotive Co. The Consolidation type would become ACR's dominant road power until World War II. By 1926 all steam from ACR's early years was

gone, leaving five 4-6-0s and 15 2-8-0s purchased in 1911-12.

ACR also owned a pair of 2-10-2s, Nos. 50-51, built in 1929 by CLC to handle coal trains from the Michipicoten docks to the CN interchanges at Oba and Hearst. ACR soon discovered, though, that the track and bridges on its north end couldn't handle the big engines, and similar problems were found on the curves and grades of the Michipicoten branch. Until the end of steam in 1952, the 2-10-2s were assigned to the road's south end. ACR also owned the only two 4-8-0s to run in Canada, Nos. 25-26, which came from the Iron Range & Huron Bay in 1902. They were sold in 1917.

During 1940-43, World War II traffic required bigger engines, so ACR bought secondhand 2-8-2s: two from Virginian Railway, seven from the Wabash, and eight from Minneapolis & St. Louis.

Algoma Central was the first major railroad in Canada to dieselize, in 1952. In 1950 it tested EMD FP7 demonstrator 7001, and was convinced, but instead of F units, ACR went for GP7s. The road ordered 21 (Nos. 150-170), plus SW8 switchers 140 and 141, from the General Motors Diesel plant in London, Ont., for 1952 delivery. All came painted in the attractive maroon, yellow, and gray scheme identical to that of Lackawanna's road diesels. A decade later, in 1963, came GP9s 171 and 172 from GMD, a model last built in the U.S. in 1959; they were the last GP9s built. Demonstrator 7001, incidentally, was sold to the Soo Line and runs today in Soo maroon at the railroad museum in Duluth, Minn.

The 1970s finally brought "second-generation" power to ACR: three SD40s



in 1971 and six SD40-2s in 1973. A decade later, ACR bought six GP38-2s, its last new power. With the newer units came the retirement of many of the venerable Geeps, but in 1978 ACR had nine of the GP7s rebuilt: five at GMD and four at CN's Transcona Shops in Winnipeg. ACR's last diesels arrived in 1994: GP40-2s 190-191, rebuilt by National



Typical of ACR's secondhand fleet of the 1960s–1980s was this former SP articulated coach, at Agawa Canyon in '84. A black bear and tracks (below "Algoma") was painted on many cars.

J. David Ingles

Railway Equipment from Milwaukee Road GP40s.

ACR's Steelton yard and shop complex adjacent to Algoma Steel in the Soo maintained the locomotives and cars. In deference to the region's winter weather, one building housed an indoor turntable.

Tour trains, and changes

In 1950s AC&HB began advertising fall color tours from the Soo to Agawa Canyon on its regular passenger trains. Their popularity grew, and in the 1960s a separate tour train was established during summer and early autumn. They became immensely popular, and the road began buying used passenger cars to handle the business. During the 1970s and '80s, ACR ran some of the longest passenger trains in North America, up to 24 cars pulled by as many as five Geeps. Traffic grew to about 100,000 passengers a season on the Canyon trains. ACR ads exhorted passengers to "Ride the Tracks of the Black Bear," and the road also began a variation, a winter "Snow Train" running on weekends be-

tween Sault Ste. Marie and the Canyon.

The ACR was built through the heart of the 18,800-square-mile Algoma District recreational wilderness area. In most cases, the railroad has been the only means of reaching the area, other than small floatplanes. Its Soo–Hearst passenger train stopped almost anywhere along the line, providing year-round access for residents or visiting campers, hunters, and fishermen to private camps, cottages, and lodges. Baggage cars — often more than one per train — would carry many a canoe and snowmobile, in addition to supplies of food, fuel, and such. Providing this service long has been a losing proposition, though, and in the modern era, the local trains — now less than daily — have been subsidized as "essential service."

ACR in the 1960s began to diversify, expanding its marine operations and entering into trucking, real estate, forestry, and mining. By 1979 these enterprises were more profitable than rail operations, and in 1990, in a corporate reorganization, the company's name was

changed to Algoma Central Corp., with Algoma Central Railway as a subsidiary.

By 1994, the railway was handling a little over 30,000 shipments a year with 450 employees. Total operating revenues were \$21 million, including passenger and tour train revenue of \$5.3 million, of which \$2.3 million came from the province. Still, the company lost about \$800,000, and the corporation decided to sell the railroad.

Enter Wisconsin Central

Algoma Central Corp. found a buyer in Ed Burkhardt's expanding regional railroad Wisconsin Central Ltd., formed in 1987 from former Soo Line routes, including the line to Sault Ste. Marie. WCL formed subsidiary WC Canada Holdings to purchase the ACR, which occurred on January 31, 1995; the line became Algoma Central Railway, Inc. Much of the \$8.4 million funding for purchase came from the Province of Ontario through grants and loans, and included in the sale was the right to use the Black Bear emblem. WCL immediately cut the number of employees from 450 to 220. In 1998, when Algoma Steel closed its iron-ore mine in Wawa, WCL abandoned the Michipicoten branch.

Although WC integrated Algoma Central's diesels into its fleet and sent them to the U.S., they weren't the last to wear the Algoma Central name. To release ACR's newer units for U.S. service, WC bought 11 F units from VIA Rail for Algoma Central passenger trains. Included were six FP9s, a rebuilt FP7, and four F9Bs. The cab units entered service in July 1995, painted in silver and maroon with a yellow stripe and Black Bear nose logos; two of the B units were reactivated later. Up to six Fs were used on



Second-generation GP38-2s and SD40s pose at ACR's shop in 1984; WCL-era passenger and freight units soak up sun at Hearst 13 years later.

Left, J. David Ingles collection; above, Robert S. McGonigal

the Canyon train during peak season, and two dome cars were added. The "covered wagon" era ended in early 2001 after WC determined it would be cheaper to run the trains with freight units.

Later in 2001, Canadian National bought Wisconsin Central, with the ACR included, and today the former ACR is the Soo Subdivision of CN's Eastern Division. Modern CN freight power has replaced the old ACR and WC units.

Since its takeover, the Canadian giant has tried to downsize and/or eliminate the passenger trains. In 2004, winter passenger service to Hearst was reduced to three round trips per week, eliminating the northbound train on Saturday and the southbound on Sunday. In 2007, summer service was likewise reduced, and in 2014 remained triweekly in each direction. CN discontinued the Snow Train in 2013.

A key element in drawing tourists to an otherwise economically depressed area, the Agawa Canyon Tour Trains remain, with local and provincial financial support. The trains are made up of mostly former CN Tempo intercity cars built in 1968 and last employed on the defunct Denver Ski Train. Faced with continuing the operation, CN in 2009 bought the Ski Train's cars, plus its three former Amtrak F40PHs. It's a far cry from the days of long tour trains with conventional "heritage" equipment, but at least the Tracks of the Black Bear remain in service for both freight and passengers through the Ontario wilderness. 🐻

Algoma Central fact file



(comparative figures are for 1938 and 1995)

Route-miles: 323, 322

Locomotives: 22, 23

Freight and passenger cars: 993, 879

Headquarters city: Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.

Special interest group: Canadian National Railways Historical Association, Greg King, Membership, 51 Sommerfeld Drive, Regina, SK S4V 0C6; www.cnlines.ca.

Recommended reading: *Tracks of the Black Bear*, by Dale Wilson (Green Tree Publishing, 1974); *Algoma Central Railway*, by O. S. Nock (A&C Black Ltd., 1975); and three books by Dale Wilson, published by Nickel Belt Rails in 1984, 1990, and 2013.

Source: Author's materials

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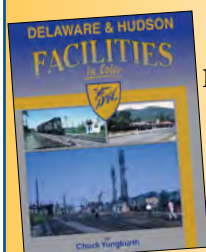
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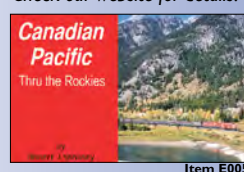
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Steam autumn

On the second half of an epic, month-long trip in late 1956, a Californian finds steam in northern Colorado and on D&RGW's narrow gauge

By **Stan Kistler** • Photos by the author





Just before sunset on Saturday, November 17, 1956, at Milliken, Colo., I photographed a Great Western Railway sugar beet train heading back to the road's home base at Loveland.



Great Western 2-8-0 No. 75 is about 5 miles east of Loveland with beet hoppers that were loaded on Union Pacific's Fort Collins branch and interchanged to the GW at Milliken.



The Great Western's biggest engine, Decapod No. 90, shows a clear stack and a trail of steam from the whistle as she works east near Kelim with cars for the UP interchange at Eaton.

Cheyenne, Wyo., Tuesday, November 13, 1956.

I was in a motel 1,100 miles from my home in Pasadena, Calif., after another successful day photographing heavy steam power on the Union Pacific main line ["Where the Big Boys and Challengers Roamed," Spring 2013 CLASSIC TRAINS]. Now it was time to begin the drive back to California.

Being this far from home, though, with other active steam so close, I decided that before heading west I should go south to see the sugar-beet activity in northern Colorado, which at this time of year was in full swing. I knew that beet-hauler Great Western Railway, and one of its connections, Colorado & Southern,



One of three 2-8-0s on the Great Western, No. 60 was assigned at Windsor this beet season, shoving loaded beet gons up a steep ramp to unloading bins at the GW sugar refinery there.

both still were using steam power.

The next morning the weather changed, and it was very cold with snow in the air. Somewhere north of Greeley, Colo., I encountered a patch of ice on the highway. Before I realized what was happening, my Chevy was spinning around, and I ended up on the shoulder of the opposing lane! Fortunately there was no oncoming traffic. I decided then and there that I didn't want to drive in these conditions. I cautiously proceeded to Greeley and a motel to wait out the frigid weather.

It was now Thursday, November 15, and I had been on the road for three weeks. A bright sunny day with the temperature in the 40s lured me out to see what the Great Western was up to. This 55-mile short line had four well-cared-for steam locomotives that hauled beet trains between its headquarters at Love-

land and sugar mills at Windsor and Eaton. Three of the engines were 2-8-0s, Nos. 51, 60, and 75, and the fourth was a fine-looking 2-10-0, No. 90. That day, No. 51 was switching in Loveland, Nos. 75 and 90 were on the "main line" to Eaton, and No. 60 was at Windsor shoving beet gondolas to an unloading bin.

The operation at Windsor was exciting to listen to and to watch. No. 60 would grab two or three loaded beet gondolas off a siding, then back up a ways to get a running start for the grade up the unloading ramp. Shoving the

cars, the 2-8-0 would gain speed, and as she hit the grade, her exhausts would drop off as gravity took over. Once at the top, No. 60 just simmered away while the cars were being unloaded, then she'd back down with the empties to repeat the drill with another handful of cars. Moreover, amidst it all, there was a road crossing in the middle of this shove where the ramp started! So, with the throttle open wide, No. 60's engineer would blow a melodious *whaa-whaa-wha-whaaa* for the crossing. It was a great interlude for me!

Colorado & Southern 2-8-0 No. 648 (Baldwin, 1907) clatters across the Union Pacific's Fort Collins branch in Fort Collins with a caboose on her way west to pick up sugar beet loads.



The Great Western sugar refinery near Greeley used Union Pacific locomotives to spot beet gondolas at the unloading bins during the 1956 beet campaign. Here, Consolidation No. 537, a Baldwin product of 1903, simmers away between spots in the cold, clear air of November 16.



Working one of the UP local freights based in La Salle, 2-8-0 No. 355 departs for Greeley. Baldwin built the 355 for Southern Pacific in 1904, when E. H. Harriman controlled both the UP and SP. After Big Boys and Challengers on Sherman Hill, I enjoyed all this UP small-engine action.



Consolidation 357, westbound with beet gons on Union Pacific's Brighton–Boulder branch, crosses UP's Dent branch, which paralleled the Denver–Wyoming main line between Sand Creek and La Salle, Colo., at St. Vrain. Another ex-SP Baldwin, she was a hand-fired coal-burner.

The Colorado & Southern picked up or set out beets at Windsor, too, and I shot some of its 2-8-0s there and at nearby Fort Collins, where I also encountered a C&S 2-10-2. Fort Collins was an excellent place for “roster shots” of C&S engines, and the employees there were very friendly toward me.

UP action north of Denver

Good weather was holding, and I spent the next three days shooting all three railroads — Great Western, C&S, and Union Pacific — in the area about 50 miles north of Denver encompassing Eaton, La Salle, Greeley, Fort Collins, and Loveland. There wasn't a diesel to be seen! All of the steam activity allowed me to do considerable movie photography, along with 35mm Kodachromes and 4x5 black-and-white negatives, plus of course 616-size black-and-white roster shots.

The UP had a few small engines based in La Salle for locals and beet runs, all 2-8-0s and 2-8-2s. I even encountered a coal-burning, hand-fired 2-8-0, No. 357. This engine had begun life as Southern



Also at St. Vrain, 2-8-2 No. 2295 has uncoupled from its southbound Dent branch train to take water. She waits in the clear for another 2-8-2 that will move onto the Boulder branch.



Consolidation 6072, built by Alco in 1907 for UP subsidiary Los Angeles & Salt Lake, takes empties south from the Great Western refinery at Greeley for distribution and reloading at various points on the branches. The engine and semaphores exemplify Harriman-era standards.



Class FEF-1 4-8-4 No. 802 (Alco, 1937) sets out from La Salle with a mixed freight train for Fort Morgan, 52 miles to the east on UP's line to Julesburg, Colo., on November 18. Delivery of the larger FEF-2s and FEF-3s inspired the nickname "Baby 800s" for UP's original 4-8-4s.



With cylinder cocks blasting, 0-6-0 No. 4448 moves off the turntable at Union Pacific's Denver roundhouse on November 20, the day I headed south out of UP territory.

Pacific 2737 in 1904, when E. H. Harri-man controlled both UP and SP. It was transferred to UP in 1910 and was still going strong 46 years later. A sister Consolidation with a similar SP heritage, UP 355, was also based at La Salle but had been converted to burn oil.

UP's La Salle-Denver mainline locals were using USRA 2-8-2s 2497 and 2498, and Consolidation 537 was working as a switcher at a Great Western beet mill near Greeley. Another 2-8-0, No. 6072, carried LA&SL initials (for UP subsidiary Los Angeles & Salt Lake) on the back of her tender and had seen service in Southern California for many years before the California Division was dieselized in 1947. Here she was in Colorado, still putting in a good day's work.

The shooting was so good at La Salle that I based myself there for another day while I explored UP's Boulder and Dent branches, as well as the main line south to Denver. I even caught a 4-8-4 with a freight heading east out of La Salle for Fort Morgan.

At St. Vrain, where the Dent and Boulder branches crossed, I photographed a Dent branch meet involving a

couple of 2-8-2s, followed by 2-8-0 No. 357 crossing westward, bound for Boulder. Farther south on the main line at Brighton, I was pleasantly surprised to get a great movie of a Big Boy heading for Cheyenne or Laramie. I had not been aware that the big 4-8-8-4s occasionally ran to Denver.

So long, UP; hello, Rio Grande

On Monday, November 19, I finally reached Denver and spent a delightful supper and evening with my friend Dick Kindig. We discussed railroad photography at length, and Dick brought out stacks of postcard prints to look at. He had a great sense of humor, and occasionally dropped some of his outrageous puns on me. We talked on until the wee hours about friends in the hobby, some of whom had passed on. Such was the case with Frank Peterson, who had brought Dick and me together on Cajon Pass in fall 1950.

I needed to move on, but before I left Denver I checked the UP roundhouse. There was lots of steam activity, and I

shot a few slides before heading on to Pueblo, 120 miles to the south. There had been a light snowfall overnight, but the sun was shining brightly as I stopped at the Rio Grande yard in Pueblo. I was pleasantly surprised to find a couple of D&RGW 2-8-0s switching and, over by the roundhouse, a line of dead 2-8-8-2s.

I was back on the highway in early afternoon, headed toward Walsenberg and over La Veta Pass to Alamosa, home of the D&RGW narrow gauge. Once into Alamosa I immediately went just south of town to check in at the Narrow Gauge Motel. This motel, a mecca for railfans, was run by Robert W. Richardson, a great fan the Colorado narrow gauges. Out in front were displayed several narrow-gauge locomotives and a Rio Grande Southern "Galloping Goose" railbus.

Bob Richardson had been putting out a newsletter, the *Narrow Gauge News*, which one could receive just for the cost of postage. I was a regular subscriber, and Bob recognized my name when I signed in. We had some long and enlightening talks while I was there, and



At Pueblo, Rio Grande 1138 (Alco, 1908) was one of two Consolidations assigned to switching duty. Although winter is still a month away, an overnight dusting of snow covers the yard.

one could not ask for a better host. His knowledge of railroads, particularly those in Colorado, was astounding.

Bob mentioned that the Rio Grande still had a standard-gauge 2-8-0 working the Creede branch, a 69-mile line west through the San Luis valley. The train started out of Alamosa most afternoons

about 2 or 3 o'clock. With this bit of information, I wandered back to the Alamosa roundhouse just as Consolidation 1151 was being readied for a run to Creede. After it coupled to the train and made ready to leave, I drove ahead and picked a spot for a movie runby and a color slide. I made one more photo stop

to the west, then decided to get back to the motel in Alamosa as the light was fading and the temperature was dropping rapidly.

Into narrow-gauge country

On Wednesday, November 21, I was ready to follow the narrow gauge southwest to Chama, N.Mex. As I stepped out of my motel room, the temperature on the thermometer near the office read *minus* 12 degrees! This was the coldest this Southern Californian had ever been exposed to, and it literally took my breath away. How could this be? The sun was shining brightly, and there was not a cloud in the sky. Nevertheless, I put on layers of clothing before I went to start the car. I said good-bye to Bob Richardson and, loaded with information on good photo locations between Alamosa and Chama, I set out for breakfast. (I would learn that Alamosa, at 7,500-foot elevation in a flat, arid valley, is considered the coldest U.S. city in the 48 states.)

After breakfast, I started south on Highway 285 and soon caught up with a westbound freight powered by double-headed Mikados 495 and 487, with both standard- and narrow-gauge cars in the consist. It was easy to get a shot, then drive ahead and set up for another one in the 14 miles between La Jara and Antonito. There was even time to get the movie camera up on a tripod for a runby while I shot in both 35mm and 4x5 stills.

At Antonito, end of the dual-gauge track, I watched as the crew set out the standard-gauge cars. I then got on Highway 17 for the trip to Chama over Cumbres Pass.

I'd been over the pass by train, but this was the first time I had driven it. In summer 1951 I was aboard the Railway Club of Southern California's "Rio Grande Holiday" excursion, from Alamosa to Durango to Silverton and return, on a chartered passenger train. That trip filled me with the desire to go back and spend more time on this spectacular railroad, and here I was.

When I reached Chama, the temperature remained below freezing, but it was still sunny. I checked into a motel, planning to stay for a couple of days. Down at the yard there was plenty of activity, and I took some roster shots. The next morning, the weather was still fine, so I planned on driving back toward Cumbres for more photography. Before I left, I went to the yard again and saw a crew making up a train to go east. I decided to talk to them. The conductor and his two



D&RGW's standard-gauge branch to Crede, Colo., ran northwest from Alamosa. It generated lots of perishable traffic, as shown by this train of empty reefers behind 2-8-0 No. 1151 leaving Alamosa on the branch. It's November 21, another cold day among many on my trip.

brakemen were discussing their next move, and as I approached, I recognized the conductor as Walter Hinton, who'd been our conductor on the 1951 excursion. We'd become friends on that trip and had exchanged letters and photos in the years following. I was as pleased to see him again as he was to see me.

We exchanged pleasantries and caught up on things. He then told me he and his crew were making up a "Cumbres Turn" and invited me to ride along! I could hardly turn down that invitation. Walter explained they would take part of a train up to Cumbres and leave it, then return to Chama with the caboose and get the rest of the train. At Cumbres summit, the two parts would be put together and continue as one train to Alamosa. He told me I'd be back in Chama in late afternoon, so with cameras in hand, I climbed aboard the caboose.

Our train had three Mikados, K-36 engines 481 and 485 on the point and K-37 No. 495 about mid-train. The caboose had a warm fire in the coal stove, and I spent most of my time up in the cupola.



Along D&RGW's three-rail line between Alamosa and Antonito, Colo., I caught up to a train of standard- and narrow-gauge cars powered by two slim-gauge 2-8-2s near La Jara. The standard-gauge cars will be set out at Antonito before the train proceeds to Chama, N.Mex.



A highlight of my trip was a November 22 ride on a Cumbres Turn up the grade from Chama, N.Mex., to Cumbres, Colo. Partway up the pass, a view from the caboose shows two K-36 Mikes on the point and a K-37 at mid-train. Today, Cumbres & Toltec Scenic tourist trains run here.



Of course there were no train radios on the narrow gauge, so when everyone was ready to start pulling, each engine would whistle off with two short toots. The three engines had three different-sounding whistles. One had a single-note hooter, and the others had chime whistles, but both were different. The lead engines started up, and then the mid-train engine did. From then on it seemed as if all were in full throttle most of the way up.

At the Lobato trestle, the train stopped. The lead engine cut off and ran alone across the bridge. Walter told me that, because of weight restrictions on the bridge, only one locomotive at a time could be on it. The two lead engines coupled up on the east side of the bridge, and we were again on our way toward the summit. It was a thrilling ride up the mostly 4 percent grade. The upper portions had a light snow cover.

The train was set out at Cumbres, and the engines then turned on the wye to head back to Chama. The mid-train helper turned first and went back west light-engine. The two lead engines then

During the switching operations at Cumbres, K-36s 481 and 485 from the head end have been wyed and are about to couple onto the caboose. The snowshed that covered the wye is beyond the water column next to the 481.

coupled onto the caboose, and away we went. It was late afternoon when we got back into Chama, and I said good-bye to Walter and his crew. Not being a working railroader, this was a great experience for me, to be part of an operation that took place day in and day out for so many years. It is a ride I've always remembered.

Homeward-bound

I headed west next morning and followed the narrow gauge where I could. At Dulce, 29 mile west of Cumbres, I heard a train approaching and had just gotten out the 4x5 and loaded the film holder when a doubleheader appeared around a curve. Leading was K-37 498 with a snowplow pilot, making for a great shot. I then pushed on to Durango for the night.

There was an upsurge of business on the narrow gauge that year owing to development of new natural gas fields in northern New Mexico. This required hundreds of carloads of pipe moving over the D&RGW from Alamosa to Durango and then south to Farmington, N.Mex. I watched as one of these Farmington-bound pipe trains made ready to leave Durango. I set up for a movie run-by and an action shot a few miles south of town at Carbon Junction [see cover], where the Farmington line diverged from the Chama main line. The scene made for great photos in the morning light. I took another shot down in a canyon along the Las Animas River, then went ahead on Highway 550 to Aztec and then west into Farmington. The thing I remember most about Farmington was the best steak dinner I'd ever had!

I drove to Gallup, N.Mex., that afternoon, and from there, it was time to "put the pedal to the metal," as we would later say, and head home to Pasadena. Driving straight through the following day on Route 66, with a short rest in Flagstaff, Ariz., I was home by late Saturday evening, November 24.

I'd spent 31 days on the road. My records of the exact miles I covered have been lost to time, but it had to have been close to 3,000. Now it was time to process the hundreds of rolls of black-and-white film, take the slide film to the Kodak lab in Hollywood, and replenish the bank account (that is, find a new job!).

This adventure was the greatest rail-oriented trip I ever made, and occupies a fond place in my memory (and contributed fabulous photos to my files). Such a long odyssey was never to be repeated, but I did it my way! ■



Back in Chama, it is late afternoon and the three Mikados from the first Cumbres Turn have been turned and serviced and are ready to pick up the second portion of the train.



California-bound the day after my Cumbres ride, I caught K-37 Mikes 498 and 491 on an east-bound freight near Dulce, N.Mex., 29 miles west of Chama. I was home the following night.



Strange bedfellows

"It looks fake." That was my initial reaction when I re-discovered this almost-forgotten photograph when going through some slides from the 1970s that I hadn't looked at for years.

And indeed, the unposed side-by-side placement of Pennsylvania Railroad-liveried GG1 No. 4935 next to Amtrak RDC No. 28 (originally New Haven 141, one of two cab-equipped RDCs custom-built for the NH) seems con-



J. W. Swanberg

trived, unnatural . . . almost like the “time warp” groupings of old and new equipment often seen at railroad museums.

But this lineup was part of everyday railroading on this December 13, 1978. The 4935, owned by Amtrak and restored to PRR colors at railfans’ expense in May 1977, was a regular visitor to New Haven, Conn., where the photo was taken, that being the eastern end of electrified trackage on her normal Northeast Corridor haunts. (Wires were finally extended to

Boston in 2000, nearly two decades after Amtrak retired its GG1s.) New Haven was also the regular turning point for No. 28 on its connecting runs between there and Springfield, Mass. (its brief 1957–58 fling as part of NH’s *Roger Williams* lightweight train was long forgotten). Thus, these two highly dissimilar units were normal denizens of New Haven Motor Storage at the time of this photo.

But it still looks fake. — J. W. Swanberg



LONG WAY HOME for Christmas

Riding from east Tennessee to Detroit — via St. Louis — in 1965
gave evidence of the passenger train's decline

By J. David Ingles • Photos by the author



A long Louisville & Nashville *Georgian*, looking like the one I rode into St. Louis six days before except for having E7s and not Fs, rolls past Union Station December 19, 1965, prior to backing into a track under the trainshed.

Normally, most college students heading home for Christmas would take the fastest, most direct way back to their parents' place, right? Free food and accessible laundry facilities, hometown friends, and all that. This was not the case for me in 1965. After my graduation from MacMurray College in central Illinois that June, I enrolled for one year in the University of Tennessee's transportation program for graduate work, and I spent the 1965–66 school year in Knoxville. My Bachelor of Science degree in Business-Economics at a small liberal-arts college had few specialty courses, so at U.T., I



My three-week Christmastime 1965 odyssey began December 12 on Southern 41, the *Pelican*, at Knoxville. I couldn't both get a photo and climb aboard, so subbing for the FP7/E7A up front on that drab Sunday is this FP7/E7B tandem four weeks later, on January 8, 1966.



Worthy of remark was dining on the *Georgian* in Duncan Hines. The diner, pictured in Louisville in 1968, was scrapped, but an ex-SP car honors it at the Bowling Green (Ky.) railroad museum.

Tom Smart photo, author's collection

took more senior-level transportation courses than graduate classes. Academic benefits aside, my nine months in Knoxville acquainted me with many new railroads and locations in the Southeast, and I made several new friends, some of whom I remain in touch with today.

U.T. was on the quarter system, which meant a three-week "Christmas vacation" after the fall term. My 1961 black Ford Galaxie had been acting up, so after visiting the Southern Railway station to buy train tickets for a triangle trip home to Detroit (via St. Louis and Chicago), I parked it for the duration on Highland Avenue opposite the home in which I rented a room. The rail odyssey would take me back to central Illinois to visit friends, then to my parents' home in

Dearborn, Mich., and back to Knoxville for the winter 1966 quarter. I would patronize five railroads and ride six trains. A "trip report" I wrote at the time began, "Spurning the airlines on the theory that I can try them when the trains are gone in a few years, all vacation travel was once again by rail." That observation was a logical one, the way passenger service was going, especially in the South.

I left Knoxville on the rainy afternoon of Sunday, December 12, on Southern train 41, the *Pelican*, a Washington–New Orleans secondary run that, along with the *Birmingham Special* and *Tennessean* (which went to Memphis), operated over the Norfolk & Western via Lynchburg and Bristol, Va. I'd photographed the *Pelican* numerous times during the



Illinois Central's *Green Diamond*, train 22, is ready to pull out from under the St. Louis Union Station trainshed in December 1966, a year after my trip. Up front is E8 4027, whose lower area of orange paint was, with the exception of one B unit, deeper than on all other IC E units.

Walt Peters photo, author's collection



On my December '65 ride on 22, IC business car No. 1 (pictured in 1963) was on the rear.

autumn. On this day, we left Knoxville 35 minutes late at 2:45 p.m. with a typical consist: FP7 and E7 for power (6146 and 2919), four mail or express cars, two coaches, and New York–Chattanooga 14-roomette/4-double-bedroom sleeper *Shenandoah Valley*. The train's interior was clean but mostly empty of passengers. We arrived at Chattanooga Terminal Station (now the "Choo Choo" hotel and conference complex) on time at 5:30.

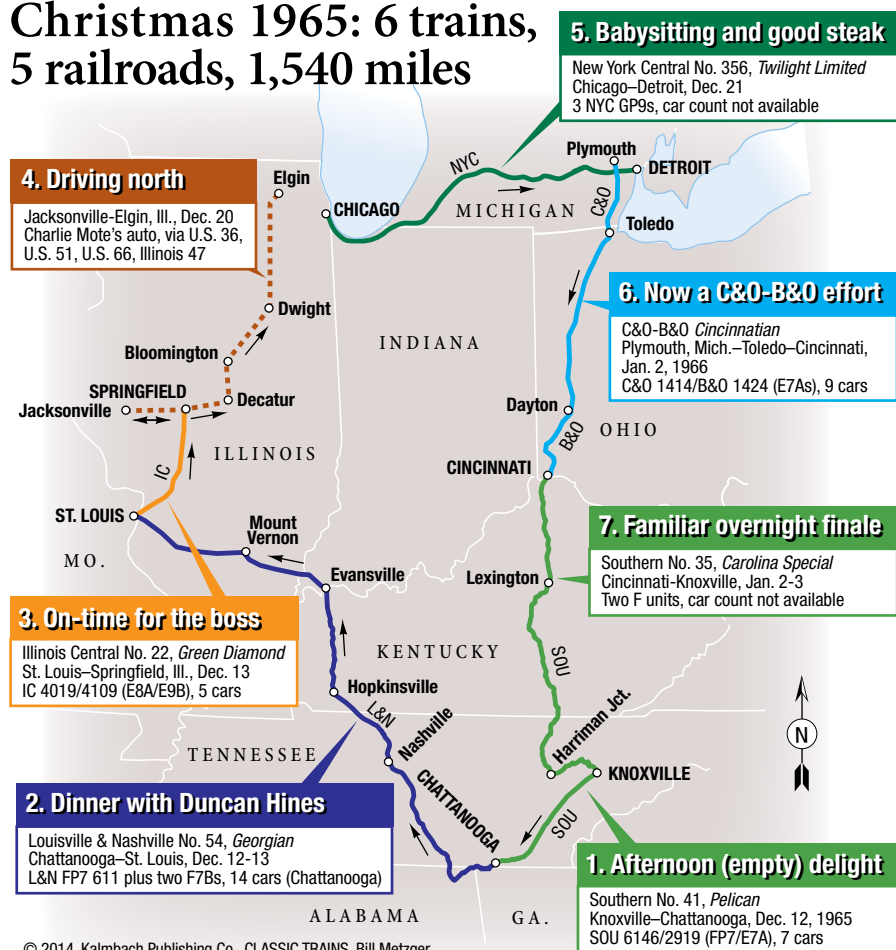
Why go southwest first? My initial destination was Springfield, Ill., and while I could have gone north to Cincinnati and then west to St. Louis, I'd ridden Knoxville–Cincinnati several times and I'd also ridden B&O's Cincinnati–St. Louis line. (Always seeking a new train or route, I would try Louisville & Nashville's coach-only overnight former *Flamingo* to Cincinnati once, in the spring.)

My "something new" for this trek was L&N's Atlanta–St. Louis *Georgian*, due out of Chattanooga a little before 9 p.m. Since my layover was three-hours-plus, I first went to L&N's Union Station on 9th Street and made sure the *Georgian's* dining car still would be open after departure. It would be. I checked my luggage, then walked a few blocks north to take in a movie. Don't ask me what film it was.

Returning to Union Station, I found the previously deserted and tomb-like head house alive with patrons. Notably absent, of course, was Western & Atlantic 4-4-0 No. 3, the *General*, whisked from its display platform under the cover of darkness in 1959 by W&A successor L&N for restoration and return to service for a tour marking the Civil War's centennial. (Probably some Chattanoogaans have never forgiven the railroad for swiping the locomotive; the city lost a custody lawsuit in 1970, and the railroad eventually deeded the *General* to the state of Georgia. Today it's displayed at a museum in Kennesaw.)

I joined the crowd at the depot to await the arrival of the finest of the three passenger trains still plying the east end

Christmas 1965: 6 trains, 5 railroads, 1,540 miles



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of the old Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis, by this time part of L&N for eight years. Train 54's 12-minute dwell time was sufficient for me to note the consist. Behind FP7 611 and two F7Bs were 14 cars: four various head-end; a dorm-combine; Chicago & Eastern Illinois sleeper *Florida Flowers*, with 4 sections, 4 roomettes, 1 compartment, and 5 double bedrooms, for Chicago (C&EI handled the Chicago section north of Evansville, Ind.); three Chicago coaches (one C&EI); a diner; lounge *Cincinnati Club*; coach 3264 for St. Louis; and two 6-section/6-roomette/4-double-bedroom sleepers, *Plantation Pine* and *Georgia Pine*. My roomette was in *Plantation Pine*; the car behind it, for Louisville, would come off at Nashville in L&N's great pre-midnight car exchange with the New Orleans–Cincinnati *Humming Bird*, for which 35 minutes were allotted.

Dinner in the diner was not of the “nothing could be finer” category — even, ironically, out of Chattanooga. The food and service were good, but it was a lonely experience, as I was the only patron to answer “last call.” Perhaps the meal's best aspect was the 48-seat car itself: 2799 *Duncan Hines*, ACF-built in 1946 for the *Georgian* and named for the pioneer in rating restaurants for travelers.

Hines (1880–1959) was a native of Bowling Green, Ky., on L&N's Nashville–Louisville–Cincinnati route. His ratings work came from the inconsistent food he'd had as a traveling salesman, and he added a lodging guide and became nationally known through a newspaper column. Today a dining car with that name is part of a four-car display at the restored L&N station and Railpark Museum in Bowling Green, but it's not the real thing. The car I dined in was cut up, and the museum displays an ex-Southern Pacific car.

After dinner I relaxed in the half-full lounge car for a bit, but I was in my roomette and asleep before our 11 p.m. arrival in Nashville, although I awakened long enough to note the time. I awoke briefly again, in Madisonville, Ky., as we pulled out at 1:45, on time, but I'd missed Hopkinsville, Ky., at 1 o'clock, where some distant family members on my dad's side are buried. I also stayed completely zonked out through the 15-minute stop (3:45–4:00) and car-shuffling in Evansville.

I woke up for good about 6:15 Central Time as we departed Mount Vernon, Ill. Breakfast in a heavyweight L&N diner added at Evansville was tasty and rea-



Our December 19 St. Louis photography included these subjects from the 21st Street bridge: MoPac Second No. 2, the south Texas section of the *Texas Eagle*, arrives (top) as N&W's *City of Kansas City*, at right, heads west. Before that, N&W's *Wabash Cannon Ball* (center) departs, again, as a week before, separate from the *Blue Bird* and again with ex-Wabash E8 3815. Next, N&W's mixed 214 from Council Bluffs, Iowa (above), due at 8:15 and having shed most of its freight cars, comes in as the long L&N *Georgian* (at right) prepares to back into Union Station.

sonably priced, and as we curved toward East St. Louis I saw that our train had added more mail and express cars up front, likely at Nashville. We stopped in East St. Louis's Relay Station 27 minutes late at 8:20, but by the time we backed into St. Louis Union Station, we were 45 minutes down! I don't know why.

ILLINOIS INTERLUDE

I allowed myself to miss Gulf, Mobile & Ohio's *Abraham Lincoln* departure at 8:58, for it was better that I spent the morning in St. Louis so I'd arrive in Springfield after my host, friend Dick Wallin, would be off work. After checking out Frisco's *Oklahoman*, ready to go



After driving from central Illinois to Elgin on December 20, Charlie Mote and I took night photos at Elgin's Milwaukee Road station. E9 No. 37A, one of six built in 1961 with head-end power for commuter trains (and which survives at Illinois Railway Museum), is ready to push a one-car "scoot" into Chicago, and E7 19B is on the Omaha-bound *Arrow*, now coach-only. One-car scoots are long since history owing to signal-activation needs and more patronage.

at 8:55 behind red E8s 2017 and 2016 (named *Pensive* and *Citation*, respectively), I inspected what was at the time Norfolk & Western's only repainted ex-Wabash E8, No. 3815, on the outbound *Wabash Cannon Ball* for Detroit at 9:10. (N&W would repaint four more.) Owing to extra head-end cars during the pre-holiday rush, the *Cannon Ball* and *Blue Bird* for Chicago, normally combined to Decatur, Ill., were operating separately.

I then killed several hours by riding the Hodiament streetcar line, St. Louis's last such operation. I rode PCC 1641 outbound, passing four others in covering the route, and car 1616 back. Why not photograph trains around Union Station? I'd done that many times, and on this day the weather was very dark.

My next train was another old friend from my MacMurray years, Illinois Cen-

tral's *Green Diamond* for Chicago, which was one car heftier than the normal four cars, as business car No. 1 trailed coach 2502, diner 4112 (ex-C&EI), and combine 1850, all behind two units, E8A 4019 and E9B 4109.

At the "suburban" stop of Madison, Ill. — in reality a small IC building underneath a highway overpass and sandwiched in between Chicago & North Western (ex-Litchfield & Madison) and N&W (former Nickel Plate) yards — IC President Wayne Johnston and two aides boarded the business car. With such "brass" on board, the *Green Diamond's* performance was, as one would expect, spot on-time, out of St. Louis at 2:40 p.m. and backing from Avenue Tower into the Springfield depot precisely at 4:45. Perhaps the officials' presence explained the second E unit, one more than usual.

I spent the next four days visiting in Springfield and at MacMurray, 30 miles west in Jacksonville, where my railfan buddy Charlie Mote was in his senior year. Charlie, Dick, and I drove over to Decatur for N&W photography on Saturday the 18th, and on Sunday went south 90 miles back to St. Louis, where at Union Station we picked up Detroit friend Norm Herbert for the day, just in off the second section of Missouri Pacific's *Texas Eagle*, from south Texas. (Norm, an Active Reservist in the Army, was returning from a two-week class at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. He would resume his journey home that evening on N&W's overnight *Detroit Limited*.)

It was a busy day as we photographed a dozen passenger trains of five roads, several freights, and numerous diesels, including transient Mississippi Export NW5 62; Marianna & Blountstown GE 70-tonner 75; and Elgin, Joliet & Eastern SW1 235, all property of Whistler Equipment Co. and parked at Alton & Southern's old shop in deepest East St. Louis.

On Monday the 20th I rode with Charlie in his car up to his home in Elgin, Ill., northwest of Chicago, with a late-morning stop in Decatur for more N&W action. We finished the day taking night shots at the Milwaukee Road depot in Elgin (left). The next day, after photo stops in Chicago's north suburbs that included a Soo Line RS27/F7B/GP30 consist at Schiller Park, Charlie dropped me off to grab a Milwaukee Road "scoot" (suburban train) to Chicago Union Station in time to get over to La Salle Street Station to board NYC's *Twilight Limited* to Detroit, scheduled out at 4:15 p.m.

It wasn't the observation-car-equipped "Twilight" of old ["A Train for CEOs," Fall 2012 *CLASSIC TRAINS*], having a sleeper-lounge in use as a parlor car and three GP9s as power instead of the usual two E units. Nevertheless, with the holidays approaching, the train was standing-room-only, the crowd and the early darkness precluding my jotting down a car consist or trying any photography. A Great Lakes Naval Base sailor and I helped baby-sit four well-behaved kids most of the trip, but we did take time out to enjoy the Central's famous steaks in the dining car. After running on-time across Michigan and through Dearborn (no station stop scheduled), we sat at Livernois Yard near the West Detroit junction for over an hour before pulling into Michigan Central Station well after the 10:40 scheduled arrival.

SOUTHWARD HO

In Dearborn and environs, I contented myself with spending the holiday break “properly,” mainly visiting family and friends. OK, some of those friends and I did get out for some rail photography on a day or two between Christmas and New Year’s Day 1966, before it was time for me to head back to Knoxville.

On Sunday, January 2, my parents drove me up to suburban Plymouth, Mich., to board the *Cincinnatian*. The B&O streamliner had switched its Detroit origin point from MC Station to Fort Street Union Depot, of which new (1963) ally Chesapeake & Ohio was a part owner. Although Plymouth was only 20 minutes out of Fort Street by rail, the train didn’t arrive until after 11:30, 45 minutes late! Regardless, the two E7As — C&O 1414 (renumbered from 4512, originally Pere Marquette 105), and B&O 1424, got us into Cincinnati Union Terminal on-time at 5:15 p.m.

The *Cincinnatian*, like most trains by then, wasn’t what it had been, but better than what it would become as Amtrak (and oblivion) approached. The B&O food-bar coach running ahead of a C&O coach and two B&O coaches served what my trip report termed “average fare” for lunch. (By early 1971, the train would be one E unit and a single B&O Strata-Dome coach with a “food bar” below the dome. Other than C&O’s Chicago–Grand Rapids *Pere Marquette*, which briefly carried bought-for-*Chessie* dome cars later sold to the Rio Grande, this might have been the only regular dome-car assignment, ever, in the state of Michigan, although Wabash’s made it in on football specials and the like.)

After supper at CUT and cabbing into downtown Cincinnati to catch a movie, I hopped a taxi back to the Terminal, and when Southern’s *Carolina Special* loaded, I went straight to the sleeper and pulled down my roomette bed just before our 9:30 p.m. departure. I’d ridden this train enough in the past four months to not bother taking notes, so I cannot report anything about its consist or performance. The attendant had to rouse me as we pulled into Knoxville at 6:30 a.m., 20 minutes early. It was still pitch dark outside, so I took a taxi back to my second-floor abode.

It was good to be home, especially after a circuitous, 1,540-mile series of six train rides through nine states. The long way home? Hey, as a Wisconsin friend said recently, train-riding is “always good for the soul.” ■



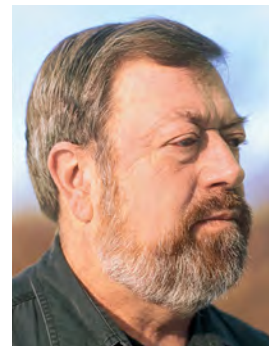
This late winter 1964 scene of New York Central’s westbound train 355, the *Michigan*, behind an E8/E7 duo, whipping past Town Line cabin in Dearborn, Mich., substitutes for a shot of the *Twilight Limited* I rode eastbound, which was powered by Geeps and mostly in darkness.

H. G. “Hank” Goerke photo, author’s collection



Behind a pair of E7s, the *Cincinnatian* (middle) squeals to a stop on the C&O at Plymouth, Mich., on January 2, 1966, to carry me to Toledo, thence onto the B&O to the Queen City. I arrived back in Knoxville on Southern’s overnight *Carolina Special* before dawn, but this late 1965 early-morning depot view of the train (above) nicely evokes the mood of the day.

Provocateur of railroad photography



In keeping with the spirit of the 1960s, John Gruber was a revolutionary

By Kevin P. Keefe • Photos by John Gruber



“... It is peculiarly a part of the good photographer’s adventure to know where luck is most likely to lie in the stream, to hook it, and to bring it in without unfair play and without too much subduing it. Most good photographs, especially the quick and lyrical kind, are battles between the artist and luck.” — *James Agee*

On the warm early afternoon of June 18, 1961, a young photographer parked alongside the Milwaukee Road right of way at Tunnel City, Wis. He set up for a view of the east portal of the 1,330-foot bore at Milepost 243.5. Then he waited for No. 58, a nameless mail-and-express train working eastward that day from Minneapolis to Chicago.

An earlier generation of photographers might have chosen to use a 4x5 or twin-lens reflex camera. But this photographer was different. Rather than heave a ponderous Speed Graphic to the top of a tripod, he was armed with a compact 35mm Pentax SLR. Sizing up the scene, he grabbed a telephoto lens and locked it into the camera’s mount.

Within a few minutes train 58 appeared at the west portal. Pointing the telephoto straight through the tunnel, the photog-

rapher began making a sequence of photos, to portray the full drama of the approach and passage of the train’s FP7-E9A diesel duo and dozen or so cars.

Five months later, John Gruber’s dramatic photos showed up on the cover and first four feature pages of the November 1961 issue of *TRAINS* magazine. Almost breathlessly, the editor, David P. Morgan, gushed about the “remarkable movielike sequence” taken at Tunnel City. In other photographic disciplines, of course, the telephoto lens was nothing new. But in the hidebound world of train photography, Gruber’s pictures

Carefully framed by overhead trolley wires, two North Shore Line cars speed toward Chicago near the Milwaukee city limits on June 9, 1962. This Gruber classic graced the cover of January 1963 *TRAINS*.





Ten-Wheelers were the regular power on the Milwaukee Road branch to Gruber's hometown of Prairie du Sac, Wis. In 1950, 4-6-0 No. 1038 is switching a small yard outside the ordnance plant north of town.



Burlington 2-8-2 No. 4960 turns on the wye at Denrock, Ill., during its last CB&Q excursion outing on July 17, 1966. Railfans — the reason CB&Q kept the Mike in service after dieselization — watch the show.

were bold, fresh, and to at least a few readers, not altogether welcome. "What a waste!" said a reader in a letter to the editor two months later. "That cover . . . has no newsstand or train appeal whatsoever. Then to rub salt into the wound, you waste four more pages with the same drabble."

Gruber ignored the comment. Driven by creative ambition and determined to be of his own time — and with Morgan acting as his chief patron — Gruber became a provocateur of railroad photography and a commanding presence throughout the rest of the '60s and beyond. Now, after a half-century, he remains one of the most influential figures in the field.

Labeling John Gruber is a tricky business. In addition to his consummate skills with a camera, he has also established solid credentials as an editor, a reporter, an author, an archivist, a preservationist, a researcher, and, with his formation in 1997 of the Center for Railroad Photography & Art, an impresario.

But most of all, Gruber is a photographer. As with most great shooters, you can recognize his work immediately. Most likely the photo has a vivid, documentary presence, an immediacy that says the photographer was riveted on the moment. Perhaps



On August 18, 1966, freshly restored Southern 2-8-2 No. 4501 leaves Chattanooga's Terminal Station on the first leg of its journey to Richmond, Va., chronicled in David P. Morgan's book *Locomotive 4501*.

the lighting is unusual, or demanding, or unforgiving. Often the image is populated by fascinating characters caught in brief, intimate moments. Usually the medium is black-and-white. And always, they don't look like anyone else's railroad pictures.

Gruber's photographic career began in Prairie du Sac, Wis., a picturesque town on the Wisconsin River not far from Madison. Gruber was born in Chicago but moved to his hometown early in his childhood. He recalls that he loved trains "as long as I can remember." Perhaps the first photo he took was on a 1946 family trip to the White Pass & Yukon in Skagway, Alaska. A few years later, on another vacation, he persuaded his family to ride the Rio Grande's *San Juan* passenger train from Alamosa to Gato, Colo. During the trip, Bob Richardson, a legendary figure in narrow-gauge country, made arrangements for the Grubers to ride the parlor car.

More often, Gruber's subjects were close to home in Prairie du Sac. He was drawn to the Milwaukee Road trains that worked the branch line serving the sprawling Badger Ordnance Works north of town, an Army ammunition facility. In

1950, for one of his earliest pictures, Gruber remembers riding his balloon-tire bicycle to catch a Ten-Wheeler working a small yard outside the Works.

Gradually the young Gruber roamed further afield, at least in Wisconsin. His local railroads — the Milwaukee and the Chicago & North Western — became favorite targets, but so did some other, more exotic Badger State offerings, such as the Green Bay & Western and the North Shore Line, the electric interurban linking Chicago with Milwaukee.

In fact, the North Shore was the subject of his first published photo in *TRAINS*, on pages 56–57 of the June 1960 issue. The photo is classically Gruber and must have made quite an impression on Editor Morgan, who ran it practically full spread. A North Shore excursion had paused at Northbrook, Ill., on a freezing February 21, 1960, and everyone got off to shoot a regular southbound train. Rather than get the typical action shot, Gruber stood back behind the crowd and composed a dramatic panorama of shivering railfans as the train of Silverliner cars blurs the film in a cloud of powder.

Gruber attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison, graduating in 1960 with a journalism degree. Although he did not take any photo classes, he was very much a student of newspaper photography, citing Dick Sroda of the *Wisconsin State*



Milwaukee Road's Calumet, Mich.–Chicago *Copper County Limited* stops for mail and express on a frigid January 1, 1965, at Champion, Mich., where the train switched from Soo Line to Milwaukee tracks.



Ralph "Dugan" Kepler, the operator at the Milwaukee Road station in Madison, Wis., gestures in a photo from the early 1980s. Gruber's many images of railroaders at work constitute an invaluable record.

Journal and Jim Stanfield of the *Milwaukee Journal* as primary influences. He even attended courses put on by the National Press Photographers Association, as well as meetings of the Wisconsin Press Photographers Association. News photography inspired Gruber to reach beyond what he was seeing in train pictures. "It was a time when press photographers and journal-

ists were interested in what people were doing," Gruber says. "I saw this as an underrepresented area of railroad photography, and I took advantage of every opportunity to document railroad people at work, rather than concentrating on equipment."

After doing some reporting and shooting for weekly newspapers, Gruber applied for a reporter's job at the *Milwaukee Journal* but didn't get it. Instead, a position opened up in publications and public relations at UW, and he took it, working in Madison for the next 35 years. One of the advantages of the university job: "It gave me the flexibility to accept freelance assignments from David P. Morgan."

That Morgan became a target for John Gruber's muse isn't surprising. *TRAINS* was the dominant railroad magazine in a limited market and, beginning in the early '50s, Morgan galvanized photographers with his appetite for provocative, unconventional images. This is certainly true for John Gruber, who by the mid-'60s had become a prominent credit line in *TRAINS*, just as Philip R. Hastings and Jim Shaughnessy had in the previous decade. "Morgan was the influence," says Gruber. "He was the editor I was trying to please — no one else."

Although *TRAINS* published seemingly countless photos of Gruber's in that first decade, three specific subjects stand out as landmarks. One was his coverage of the last days of the North Shore, especially a showcase of his pictures in a January 1963



Jack Zindel (standing), the conductor on Green Bay & Western's "boat train" from Green Bay, talks with crewmen of the Lake Michigan carferry *City of Midland 41* on the dock at Kewaunee, Wis., in 1988.

cover story by William D. Middleton, "Super-Interurban Sunset." In addition to bagging another cover photo, Gruber made the story come alive with vivid pictures depicting the last days of the railroad, especially for the employees whose bittersweet task it was to bring the whole enterprise to an end.

Gruber returned to the human-interest theme in his next big splash, a photo essay about Chicago Union Station in the August 1965 issue. By this time he had made a habit of visiting Morgan at the old TRAINS offices at 1027 N. Seventh Street, Milwaukee, and as Gruber puts it, "we hit it off." It was the editor who suggested that Gruber turn his camera on CUS, a subject that hadn't received much attention in TRAINS.

The result was a revelation. Designed with lavish use of white space and minimal captions, the 13-page story presented Gruber's photos very much as art, and signaled that a significant talent had arrived. With his customary eye for the intimate detail, Gruber focused his new Nikon as much on the people of Union Station as the trains or the architecture. His essay of weary commuters, hard-working trainmen, and even an unforgettable image of a nun was as indelible as it was unconventional. In Gruber, Morgan saw a visual foil.

Gruber showed he could range beyond the Midwest three years later when Morgan showcased a stunning batch of images in the October 1969 all-narrow gauge issue. The photographer had loved the Colorado scene ever since those trips as a



A section crew hustles to dump cinder ballast from a drop-bottom gondola near Los Pinos tank on the Rio Grande's narrow-gauge line between Chama, N.Mex., and Alamosa, Colo., on August 29, 1967.

boy, and in 1967 he accepted Morgan's assignment to cover the rapidly fading steam-powered freight operations of the Denver & Rio Grande Western. In his editor's introduction, Morgan paid tribute to a pantheon of earlier photographers who had made the D&RGW their own, but also stated emphatically that he wanted a "fresh, illustrative tack." In Morgan's



Schoolchildren run to get a last ride on a Burlington Northern west-bound passenger train at La Crosse, Wis., in April 1971, a few days before this ex-CB&Q line went freight-only with the start of Amtrak.

mind, that could only mean one photographer.

With his visual memoir, “Extra 498 and 493,” Gruber delivered. Spread over nine pages (and again with a cover), Gruber drew the reader right alongside a pair of fat K-37 2-8-2s as they hauled a freight from Alamosa, Colo., west to Chama, N.Mex. Blessed again with brief captions and Art Director George A. Gloff’s sensitive layout and cropping, Gruber got to let his images do the talking. As depicted through his Nikon, the narrow gauge was the province of gritty, throwback railroaders who still knew how to shovel coal, write train orders, manhandle a water column, and coax a throttle. Gruber’s photos turned out to be the soul of that memorable issue.

If some TRAINS readers found Gruber’s work jarring, others, notably other photographers, had the opposite reaction. One of them was a young Modesto (Calif.) shooter named Ted Benson, himself on the cusp of a distinguished career. “As original as some ‘artists’ want to make themselves, down deep, the vast majority got into photography by studying the work of others and finding inspiration to try similar things themselves,” says Benson. “John Gruber was among the first such influences for me. His work sparked with state-of-the-art photojournalism at

a time when most [train] shooters followed more tradition avenues of expression.”

During this influential period, Morgan stretched Gruber again, this time with a classic book (perhaps the editor’s finest). With *Locomotive 4501* (Kalmbach, 1968), Morgan endeavored to tell the story not only of the dramatic and improbable resurrection of a Southern Railway 2-8-2, but also the wider appeal of steam. To make his point, he needed to make indelible the connection between the 4501 and the men who sponsored her, ran her, and fixed her.

Although the opening and closing chapters of the book included the work of historical and contemporary photographers, Gruber was at the heart of *Locomotive 4501*, thanks to Morgan’s decision to showcase the 2-8-2’s inaugural series of excursions and ferry moves from Chattanooga, Tenn., to Richmond, Va., via Louisville, Ky., in August 1966. To cover the nine days of operations, Morgan hired Gruber. “I went into this as-



C&NW trainman Peter Polus boards passengers on the last westbound *Rochester 400* at Madison, Wis., on July 23, 1963. The boy glancing backward is 10-year-old Paul Knutson, riding with his grandfather and brother (boarding behind him) to Lodi, Wis., where they lived. Knutson spotted himself in the photo 5 years ago when Gruber asked him to identify the trainman.



Gruber's landmark photo essay on Chicago Union Station in August 1965 *TRAINS* included a photo of a lone nun walking in the Canal Street arcade. In this striking composition, three sisters enter the station.

signment cold," the photographer recalls. "I was familiar with excursion locomotives in the Midwest, but not in other parts of the country. David called on short notice, my work schedule was flexible, and within a week I was off for Chattanooga. It turned out to be one of the best experiences of my life."

And a great decision by Morgan. The author cleared the decks for his photographer, giving Gruber gobs of horizontal white space to fill with arresting images of the 4501 in action. Some of the photos were classic Gruber action pictures, heavy with telephoto and drama, especially along the Southern's rugged profile in southern Indiana. Many were artful studies of various aspects of the 2-8-2's Georgian architecture: oily pumps and running gear, the elegant rake of smokestack and domes, the perfection of its headlight and numberplate.

Most of all, the book showcased Gruber's now-familiar approach to shooting people. Matching Morgan's prose, the photographer showed how the revival of 4501 was as much about the characters surrounding the engine as the machine itself. Gruber got in about as close as possible to the full cast of 4501's drama: the button-down owner Paul Merriman; the imperious Southern president, William Brosnan, and his lieutenant, Vice

President W. Graham Claytor; the "big, bluff" engineer (as Morgan put it) known for running the 2-8-2, Walter Dove; and a shovel-toting stand-in for firemen everywhere, Lloyd Ash.

The intimate moments Gruber captured were not just products of instinct, although instinct certainly entered into it. They also represented a strategy for how Gruber wanted to tell his stories. Gruber's *modus operandi* was simple: "If at all possible, I avoided posing people. I talked with them, told them what I was doing, and asked them to ignore me. Usually after a few minutes I would fade into the background and get interesting, animated views of people at work."

Gruber's you-are-there approach was just what the editor ordered. In fact, *Locomotive 4501* is unthinkable without his pictures. Morgan said as much in the book's credits. "... The man whose camera got closest to the engine and her crew was John Gruber. . . . He put in long hours. He was on top of the action, however unexpected and regardless of the hour. His pictures tell it as it was."



Mid-Century Railway Museum's C&NW 4-6-0 No. 1385 steams through the frozen Wisconsin landscape with a photo freight in February 1978, during one of the museum's annual Snow Train weekends.



A Belt Railway of Chicago TR2 cow-calf set rocks through Clearing Yard in a classic Gruber telephoto image that led off an 11-page study of the terminal road by writer Jerry Pinkepank in September '66 *TRAINS*.

The 1960s gave Gruber the chance to make his big splash, but he was only getting started. In the years that followed he continued to make photographs regularly, although he had less time for big projects as he and his wife Bonnie raised two sons in Madison. He turned his lens to his backyard again, and paid special attention to the Green Bay & Western,

where he used his low-key approach to good effect. "I was told that the operating vice president, Jerry Bruley, was not friendly," recalls Gruber. "But I noticed that when I was in the general office in Green Bay, he always had time for coffee and conversation. After he retired, he introduced me to everyone on the property. Everyone accepted me and I faded into the woodwork."

In a sort of encore to his 4501 work, Gruber headed south again for *TRAINS* in 1987, this time to accompany writer Bill Withuhn on the first runs of Norfolk & Western 2-6-6-4 No. 1218, which was joining N&W 4-8-4 No. 611 in the Norfolk Southern steam program. Although Withuhn's story in the September 1987 issue included the work of several photographers, Gruber's intimate access to the 1218 and its crew yielded the essential images, this time in color as well as black-and-white.

Gruber also began spending a lot of time about an hour northwest of Madison in North Freedom, home of his cherished Mid-Century Railway Museum. He served for several years as a director of the museum, but more importantly put in time as editor of Mid-Century's *Gazette*. Although he was editing a membership house organ, Gruber infused the journal with depth and style, a tradition the museum maintains today.

Gruber's turn as the *Gazette* editor may have set the stage for another major step in his career: *Vintage Rails*, a quarterly, then bimonthly, magazine about railroad history and culture, launched in 1995 by Pentrex. The splashy magazine quickly



Seen from a small airplane, C&NW's eastbound *Rochester 400* runs between the Milwaukee's Twin Cities main line and an army tank trail as it passes the military reservation at Camp McCoy, Wis., in June '61.

found a readership that responded to Gruber's tasteful mix of text and photos, with an emphasis on great photographers and 35mm slide images from the 1940s and '50s. Although Pentrex shuttered the magazine after only four years, *Vintage Rails* was an esthetic success that reflected Gruber's craftsmanship.

Although the magazine's demise was a keen disappointment, its closing gave Gruber more time for yet another singular accomplishment, the creation in 1997 of the Center for Railroad Photography & Art, an organization to foster, interpret, and display railroad images in the context of American history and culture. (Full disclosure: this writer is a director of the Center.) The impetus for launching the Center was classically Gruber: he wanted to spread the word about other photographers. The inspiration came in the wake of the death of a friend, Philip R. Hastings, who had initially indicated to Mid-Continent that he wanted his negatives donated to the museum. Around this time, Gruber wrote a 48-page book about railfan photography, *Focus on Rails* (1989), one of the first works on the subject.

Hastings' family later decided to go in a different direction, despite efforts by Gruber and other museum members. Frustrated, perhaps, but undaunted, Gruber and two associates incorporated the Center. "I had become curious about railroad photographers — who they were, their backgrounds, their ideas about photography," Gruber explains about what drove him to create the Center. The organization has sponsored several na-

tional exhibitions, made a name for itself with its annual "Conversations" symposium at Lake Forest College, preserved some important collections at the college's library, and publishes the journal *Railroad Heritage*, edited by Gruber through 2012.

You might think the groundbreaking photographer, now retired from the university, might be content to simply look back on his legacy. But he's not slowing down. Not much, anyway. His work for the Center continues. And over the past couple of years he has rekindled his affair with the Colorado narrow gauge, returning to the pages of *TRAINS* big-time in the October 2009 issue with a fresh take — all color! — on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic. He can't resist the place.

He has other plans to revisit familiar turf, if only as a writer. "I can't return to the Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee or Green Bay & Western," he says, wistfully, "but I'll write more about them and the people who made them run."

Meanwhile, leave it to Ted Benson to put John Gruber's powerful body of work into perspective: "His work provided the link between the first wave of 'rule breakers' I admired — Richard Steinheimer, Phil Hastings, Bob Hale, Stan Kistler, Jim Shaughnessy, J. Parker Lamb Jr. — and the kids in my generation with our 35mm SLRs and un-Godly telephoto lenses. Quiet, yet determined, John is a subtly dynamic individual with keen insight and a knack for being ahead of the trend."

As ahead of the trend today as he was on that summer day in 1961 when, with a sequence of images at Tunnel City, he turned railroad photography on its head. ■

C&O's *Sportsman* at Staunton, Va.

Train time at a small-city station in July 1958

Text by **Jerry A. Pinkepank** • Photo from Frank and Tom Novak collection



1 Freight house. Staunton ("Stan-ton") in 1950 had a population of 19,927. All towns of this significance once had a freight house where less-than-carload (LCL) freight was handled. Warehousemen used a forklift or hand truck to "platform" freight between boxcars and local trucks. By 1958 most railroads were getting out of the LCL business, leasing their freight houses to forwarders or consolidators.

2 Door spot. Using doors for loading/unloading instead of a sheltered platform allows maximum secure floor space inside. Trucks backed up to similar doors on the street side.

3 Peddler car. Stations intermediate to big cities were served by cars that were moved from station to station in local freight trains, being partially unloaded and partially loaded as they went. C&O 12541 was one of 487 40-ton-capacity cars in this number series in July 1958 with inside dimensions of 40½ feet long, 8½ feet wide, and 8¾ feet high, and a 6-foot-wide door. Obsolete for much commercial loading because the doors were too narrow for many forklifts and the low roof was restrictive, by 1972 only 37 remained on the roster. They were suitable for LCL, which often loaded below car capacity because of the way the material was sorted on the car floor by destination. Sometimes LCL was handled at team tracks or grade crossings.



Men load LCL into a peddler car at a Wabash grade crossing in Indiana. Linn H. Westcott

4 Freight office. Located in this case on a second floor above a portion of the freight house, it housed the freight agent and clerks including a Bill Clerk who typed up waybills for

cars originating within Staunton's jurisdiction, distributed the copies as required, and filed waybills of incoming cars, telephoning shippers that their car had arrived. The Cashier collected freight charges and made up demurrage bills for cars that were held too long by shippers including cases where they were not ready to receive them ("constructive placement"). The Switching Clerk made monthly statements of cars interchanged to and from the other railroad at Staunton, short line Chesapeake Western, and switching settlement statements for cars on which the CW did only local switching service while C&O did the waybill work for the line haul. Demurrage and switching work required visually checking the tracks where cars were spotted, for a daily 7 a.m. yard check. The waybills, yard checks, and other documents, called Station Records, were required to be maintained for two years for audit by Interstate Commerce Commission inspectors.

5 Passenger station. Staunton's was notable for being located on a relatively sharp 9-degree curve (637.3 feet radius, equivalent to an HO scale radius of 87.9 inches), with a canopy extending over the platform. The canopy remains in use today sheltering passengers using the triweekly Amtrak *Cardinal*. The station building itself has become a restaurant, as Amtrak has no ticket agents or baggage facilities here, but in 1958 there would have been ticket clerks and baggage men on three shifts to serve customers of C&O's eight daily passenger trains.

6 Platform shelter. The canopy at Staunton was supplemented by a short conventional platform shelter extending to the west, with a loudspeaker to inform passengers. Such shelters — wood structures supported on centered columns with angled struts — had a slight reverse slope to the center with asphalt roofing, with downspouts at intervals draining to pipes under the platform.

7 Footbridge. Unlike the situation at most British stations, where there was a footbridge connecting the platforms on either side of the tracks, this one (which the City of Staunton has recently rebuilt) was provided because of

the steep hillside, connecting a paved footpath from the residential district south of downtown to the commercial streets north of the station.

8 Municipal water tank. Positioned on the hillside, this one is now gone except for its foundation, but a similar one still stands east of the footbridge. One or both of these tanks probably provided pressure for railroad standpipes in the days of steam operation, besides serving the commercial district of the town.

9 HD Cabin. C&O favored Manual Block operation using towers designated as Cabins and by their two-letter telegraph call signs. Manual Block works like a manned version of Centralized Traffic Control, with the train-order signal serving to hold trains where needed for meets or overtakes. The Cabin would often be an interlocking as well, with levers to control the switches for entering and leaving sidings. HD Cabin survives today with its ground floor serving as Amtrak's unstaffed waiting room and the upper floor as a private residence.

10 Mail sacks. Head-end business, generally carried in cars immediately behind the locomotive on passenger trains, included four categories: baggage, U.S. mail, company mail, and Railway Express Agency shipments. The cardboard box under the mail sacks is probably a Railway Express parcel.

11 Baggage wagon. Unchanged for decades, these simple platforms with slightly angled edges (to keep their loads from falling off), end railings, steel-tired wheels, and tow bars that could be linked to allow multiple wagons to be pulled at once, were a staple at every passenger station. Two of them at a time was about the limit for one man to handle; larger stations had small tractors to pull four or five at once. The baggage man peers over the mail sacks as he pushes the wagon along the platform.

12 C&O E8A 4025. C&O had 31 E8As (and no E8Bs) delivered from August 1951 to May 1953 (4015 in November 1951). The E8As are running through to Detroit from

Washington, D.C., and Newport News, Va., with the sections united at Charlottesville, Va. Note that 4025 still has its coupler doors and that they are closed; many roads had forsaken this detail from the streamliner era by this time.

13 The Sportsman. Behind the head-end cars that we can see are coaches from Washington and Newport News to Detroit, a dining car, and two sleeping cars, one for Detroit and another for Chicago that will be handled beyond Cincinnati by the New York Central. Other sleepers will be added along the way, for Cleveland and Columbus, and an advance-boarding ("set-out") sleeper at Columbus for Detroit. The train was inaugurated in 1927 after C&O acquired the Hocking Valley Railroad and control of the Pere Marquette, giving C&O a route to Detroit from Ashland, Ky. The train name derived from the connection to Michigan resorts served by the Pere Marquette, but most of the patronage was business travel to and from Detroit, Columbus, and Cincinnati.

14 Siding. Provides tail room for a local freight to switch industries without fouling the main track.

15 Crossover. Allows a facing-point move from the main track into the complex of industry tracks just west of the station (behind the photographer). A switch opens east into the siding (No. 14), simplifying switching for an eastbound local freight.

16 Single-track main line. Staunton is on C&O's hilly Mountain Subdivision between Richmond and Clifton Forge, Va., the passenger route through the junction at Gordonsville with the line from Washington, D.C., and Charlottesville, where Washington and Newport News sections of passenger trains combined. Through freights between Richmond and Clifton Forge used the much easier James River Subdivision via Lynchburg, which was all downhill for loaded coal trains that formed a significant portion of the traffic and with just a half percent grade against westbounds, compared to 1.5 percent both ways on the Mountain Sub.

FRANK BUNKER

a man of steam

A cab ride on a Canadian Pacific 4-6-2 led to a decades-long correspondence

By Jim Shaughnessy • Photos by the author

In August 1957, while on one of several trips to photograph what steam was still operating in southern Ontario, I met a Canadian Pacific locomotive engineer at Guelph Junction, 39 miles west of Toronto on the main line to Windsor. Frank Bunker had been called on a “pusher engine” to help a long train of passenger cars deadheading west to London, Ont., for a troop-train extra out of the large armory there.

Helper engines were added to heavy westbounds at Lambton yard in Toronto and, if tonnage was not reduced at Galt, 51 miles out, the “pushers” would stay on for 9 miles across the Grand River and up the nearly 1 percent grade to Orr’s Lake. (CPR people called helpers “pushers” even though they were customarily placed ahead of the road engine; the Lambton-based helper assignment, filled with immigrants from England, was known as the “Cockney pool.”) The 18-car empty passenger train was in the charge of Royal Hudson 2857; Frank would assist it with 4-6-2 No. 2236.

While waiting on the Guelph Junction platform for the action to start, I struck up a conversation with Frank. I asked him what was going on, where were they going, and when they were departing. After telling me what the plan of action would be, he asked if I would like

to ride with him to Orr’s Lake, where he would cut off the pusher and return to Guelph Junction. He was obviously a mind-reader as well as a locomotive engineer. I instantly answered, “Yes!”

I was traveling with the late Warren Hills (“Hillsey”), a friend from the Buffalo area whom I would often meet for steam safaris into southern Ontario. In fact, when we stopped at Guelph Junction, we were on our way to Palmerston for CN branchline action [“Stepping Back in Time,” Summer 2014 CLASSIC TRAINS]. Frank invited Hillsey to ride, too. After the paperwork from the dispatcher was finished and the two locomotives had been watered, we walked toward the engines. Hillsey would ride in one cab, and I in the other. A meet with an eastbound was scheduled at Puslinch, 6 miles west of Guelph Junction, which allowed us to swap cabs.

The Royal Hudson’s cab was much more roomy than the Pacific’s, but I spent more time in the 2236 with Frank. It was obvious watching him that he relished, and was an integral part of, the steam locomotive and everything associated with it. Frank was definitely “in charge” as he perched on that right-hand seat, hand on the throttle, peering ahead as he leaned out the window as if he were the driver of a hurtling Wells Fargo stagecoach, holding the reins of six thun-



dering horses in front of him.

Upon reaching Orr’s Lake, 2236 was cut away, and Frank ran the it ahead beyond the west siding switch, stopped, then backed onto the passing track to allow 2857 to resume its trip to London. He then ran the 2236 back to the Orr’s Lake depot at the east siding switch. The operator, after copying orders from the dispatcher for us to run “light engine”



back to Guelph Junction, gave them to Frank, and we all re-boarded 2236 for an uneventful, though crowded, return trip.

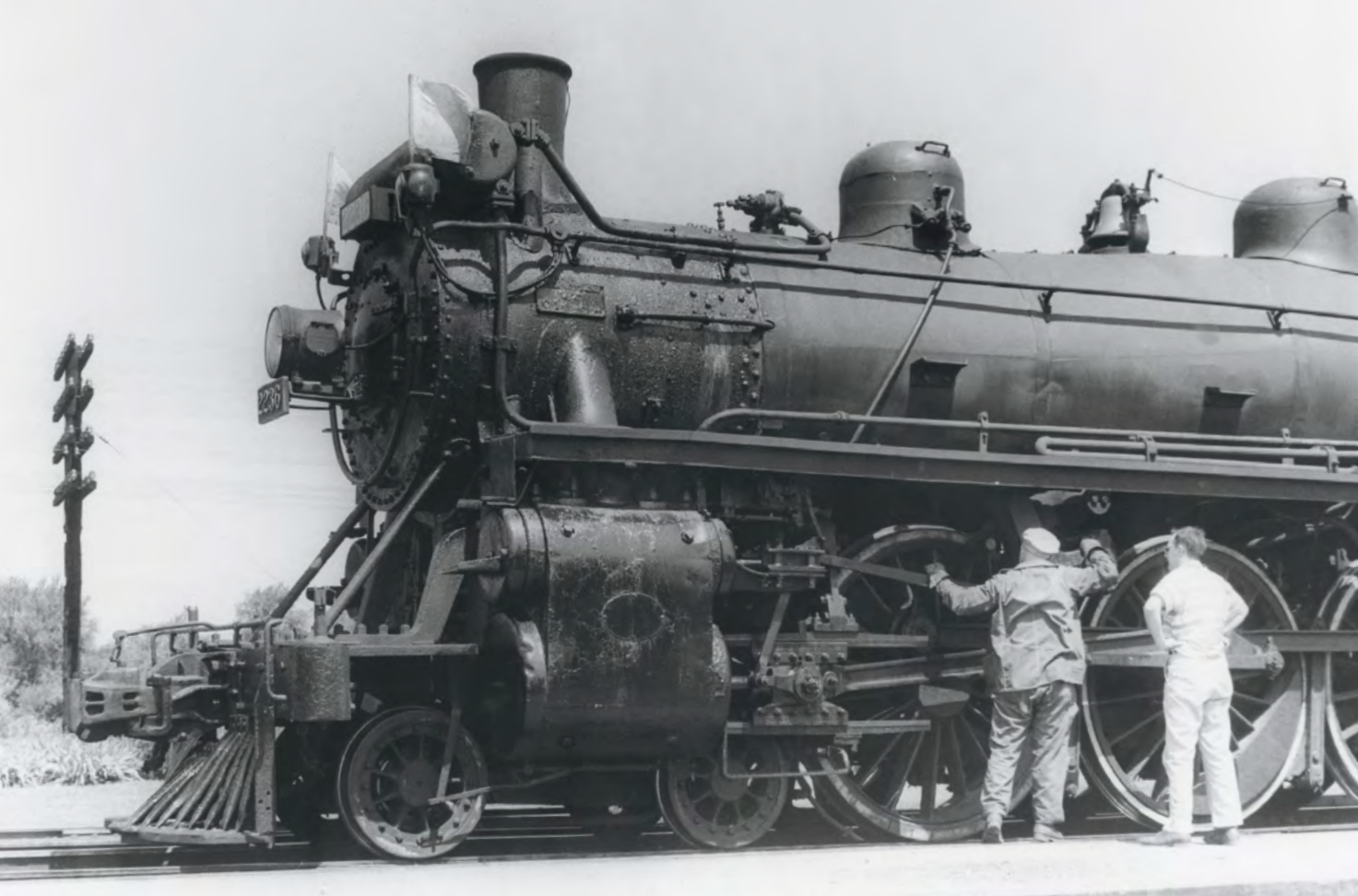
Keeping in touch

After steam was replaced on the CP by diesels (Frank called them “dismals”), he worked freight, but he complained about driving 28 miles across metropolitan Toronto to the Agincourt yard to get

the trains. “It was a damn disappointment to crawl out of bed and book on, only to find a damn gurgling dismal waiting for you with a personality rated NIL, not like a nice, warm steamer that was alive and raring to go,” he wrote me. “All you had to do is treat them right and they treated you right.”

Frank did remain active with steam locomotives, though, becoming one of

Canadian Pacific engineer Frank Bunker epitomized the steam hogger, “in complete charge of his great machine,” as here (top, facing page) en route from Guelph Junction to Orr’s Lake, Ont., on August 3, 1957. At Guelph Junction (above), the crews of the road engine and the “pusher” (in front of the road engine) conversed, and soon Mr. Bunker invited my friend and me to ride with them.



Before departing Guelph Junction, the two locomotives took water, and the engineers oiled around, Frank Bunker doing so on the 2236 with an onlooker behind him (top photo). Hillsey and I received our cab-ride invitation from Frank during this servicing interlude.

the regular engineers on steam-powered excursions on CP sponsored by railroad enthusiast groups out of Toronto. He sat on his beloved right-hand seat on many of the trips, including the famous May 1960 tripleheader to Orangeville, Ont. ["Canadian Pacific's Ontario Hat Trick," Summer 2000 CLASSIC TRAINS], featuring three of its oldest locomotives: 1883 Rogers 4-4-0 136 and Montreal D10-

class 4-6-0s 815 (1908) and 1057 (1912).

When GO Transit commuter trains out of Toronto began running on the CP in 1981, Frank booked on to run them, as the GO shops were only about 10 blocks from his house. The service was to Milton, but the trains continued on from there to Guelph Junction for their overnight layover.

After four years of running the com-

muter trains, though, Frank thought it would be more exciting to sit at home and watch the grass grow. He told me he never dreamed he'd see the day when he'd quit railroading, but he said the "dismals," plus radios, university-trained officials, computers, and so forth all took the fun out of railroading for him. Frank took his pension from the railway in June 1985 at age 60.

As we departed from Guelph Junction, our westbound deadhead passenger extra met this eastbound freight, led by 4-6-2 No. 2235, toward the end of the double track.



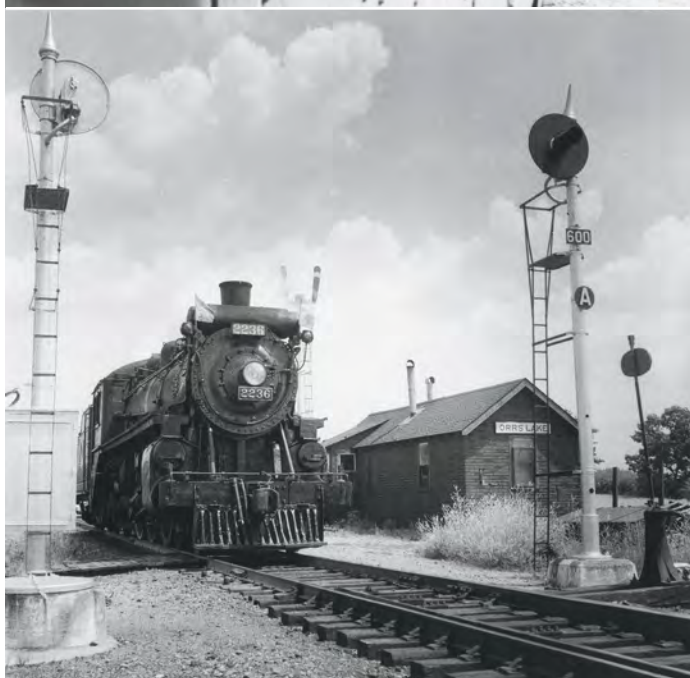


At Galt station, with another local youth looking on (top), our doubleheader held for a meet with an eastbound freight led by RS18 8744. (The overhead wires are from the interchange with an electric CPR subsidiary.) Soon we were back on board, heading west across the Grand River.

Frank's whole being was related to the steam locomotive, as illustrated in a letter he wrote to me in 1999. He'd been treated for coronary problems and reported, "Things were going OK till Oct. 1996 when my cross-compound pump wasn't doing the job, so I ended up in the backshop. They put a new main valve in my pump and took two pieces of tubing out of my legs and used them for bypass-

es to get the valve oil to my pump. When I came to in the backshop, I found they'd changed my cross-compound pump to a single pump and instead of the pump being 100 percent, it's only 29 percent, which is better than zero percent, and I can still keep company with my old gals 136 and 1057. They have me on pills but I'm not free-steaming like I used to be, and my headlight is a lot dimmer."

Although we corresponded before and after his retirement, I never saw Frank again after that enchanting ride on August 3, 1957. At age 80, in June 2004, the man who compared his body's functions to those of a steam locomotive, dropped his fire, and his boiler cooled down forever. R.I.P., dear Frank! (Born, December 24, 1924; retired, June 1985; died, June 12, 2004.) ■



As we cleared the Grand River bridge out of Galt and curved onto the Orr's Lake Hill grade, there was an opportunity (top) to look back at the long string of empty maroon coaches trailing behind us. At Orr's Lake, we stopped to detach No. 2236, then returned to the tiny depot at the east siding switch (above) for orders. In my final photo of the trip, Frank Bunker climbs back into the cab to begin our return ride eastward.

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW



Hudson River

To Albany

Loop track and bridge

Electrical substation 6A

800,000-gal. water tank

Storeroom

Old roundhouse

Blacksmith & carpentry shops

Circuit breaker house 26

Eastbound
HM home
signal bridge

Power house

Diesel inspection/servicing

Electric locomotive & car shop

Harmon station

Machine shop

HM Tower

Croton Point Ave. bridge

Westbound
HM home
signal bridge

Storeroom

Battery house

Trainmaster's office

Yard office

Diesel
fueling
and
sanding
racks

Electric inspection shed

Oil storage tanks

To New York City

NYC's home for electrics

Harmon, N.Y., 33 miles north of New York City's Grand Central Terminal, became an important facility for servicing long-distance and commuter passenger trains after the New York Central & Hudson River opened its 600-volt D.C. electrification in 1913. At Harmon, electric locomotives, required by law for trains operating within the city, would be exchanged for steam locomotives (and later, diesels) for the remainder of their runs. The shop at Harmon serviced locomotives of both the Electric Division and the Hudson Division. Electric Division track ownership ended a little over a mile north of Harmon at Croton East Yard, where M.U. cars were stored and serviced; the division included the station at Croton-on-Hudson (later called Croton North).

A bridge-like passenger station spanned the mainline tracks. The station was a Spartan affair, despite being in affluent Westchester County and a point where many important executives boarded commuter trains. During the engine change, NYC intercity trains also boarded and discharged passengers at Harmon. The old station is remembered as cramped and somewhat grimy and shaky from the constant passage of trains. Long staircases led to the platforms below. While the tracks run generally north and south along the river, trains are designated westbound and eastbound.

The Harmon centerpiece was the electric locomotive and car shop in the heart of the yards. The track arrangements went through many changes over the years. Everything was geared primarily to the needs of passenger equipment. No other railroads were near Harmon, so there was no freight interchange traffic, and there were no industrial sites adjoining the yards.

Just out of view in this circa 1961 photo are several notable structures. To the west of the old roundhouse was the new roundhouse; the old roundhouse then became a machine shop. North of the loop track, which carried steam and diesel locomotives over the main line, and bridge 94A, were CD Tower and circuit-breaker house 27. On the main line to New York, below the photo, were Croton River bridge 92 plus CR Tower and its adjoining circuit-breaker house 25.

The name Harmon came from real estate developer Clifford B. Harmon, who sold the property to the railroad with the stipulation that the station would forever bear his name. The surrounding area called Harmon became a "railroad town" but was actually in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson. The station name was changed to Croton-Harmon in 1963.

Harmon shop remains an important servicing facility for commuter carrier Metro-North Railroad, and Croton-Harmon is a key boarding point on MN's 74-mile Hudson Line to Poughkeepsie, as well as a stop for Amtrak, although dual-power (diesel and third-rail electric) locomotives now obviate the need for through-train engine changes. The old station has been replaced by an improved modern structure that retains some similarity with the old one. — *Peter Keller*

"Cripple" yard

Drop-off circle & taxi stand

North parking lot

South parking lot

Dump track

Westchester County Historical Society collection



Donner detour: Western Pacific's *California Zephyr*, with an F unit of host Southern Pacific up front while detouring from a point in Nevada to Sacramento owing to a landslide in Feather River Canyon, is stopped at the top of Stanford Curve west of Truckee in October 1963. An early-season storm has deposited a light snow cover. The job-hunting photographer was on a big western circle trip, bound for an interview with SP in San Francisco, but had talked with Southern Railway and was messaged en route to telephone back. The result: a long career beginning on Southern.

Jim McClellan

Donner storm: In views from Amtrak's west-bound *San Francisco Zephyr* on his first ride over Donner, the photographer is treated to a classic storm on March 22, 1975. The SD9s at Truckee are on a flanger extra; SP FP7 6453 was added ahead of two SDP40Fs at Sparks. The *SFZ* has an ex-SP dome, but SP did not allow Amtrak to run Budd domes, despite hosting CZ detours earlier.

Two photos, J. David Ingles





PA twilight: The cab of Delaware & Hudson Alco PA 17 yields a unique view of Lake Champlain's shoreline scenery near Willsboro, N.Y. (right), as it and a sister roll the *Adirondack* south in February 1977. The train has terminated at Amtrak's Albany-Rensselaer station (below) after the snowy run from Montreal. Most riders will change to the New York-bound Turboliner at left, the genre that soon will take over the *Adirondack*.

Two photos, Ken Kraemer





Saratoga glory: With an Amtrak-supplied dome coach ahead of a D&H diner and coaches, the *Adirondack* sprints out of Saratoga Springs, N.Y., for Montreal behind two of D&H's PAs on a bright winter day. The four Alcos, heavily rebuilt by Morrison-Knudsen beginning in June 1974, were sidelined by Amtrak Turboliners in March 1977. Lead unit 19, like the 17, is preserved at Mexico's National Railway Museum in Puebla.

Jim Shaughnessy



Afternoon roll-by: The fireman on a west-bound Erie Lackawanna freight, led by U36C 3325, gives an “all looks good” wave to his fellow railroaders in the caboose of an eastbound hotshot at Alden, N.Y., 20 miles east of Buffalo on the old Erie, on a February 1976 afternoon.

Ken Kraemer

Supper-time stop: The time exposure captures the path of a walking railroader’s lantern at Port Jervis, N.Y., on a January 1965 evening during the 10-minute stop (scheduled for 6:10–6:20 p.m.) of Erie Lackawanna 22, an all-stops local from Binghamton, N.Y., to Hoboken, N.J. E8s 818 and 826 are in charge of the mostly mail-and-express consist, scheduled to cover the 192 miles in a leisurely 5 hours 50 minutes.

Bob Krone



Ice cubes for the boilers? A solitary Alco PA tries to keep warm amidst Pacifics and other suburban-train steam locomotives at the Erie Railroad’s Jersey City depot engine terminal on February 10, 1951. Both the shadows and ice on the water tank tell us that we are looking east.

Ed Theisinger



Santa Fe's

== 1 PERCENT DECISION ==



Opened in 1960, a 44-mile line relocation across northern Arizona reduced gradients, cut curvature, and saved time

By Donald Sims

Editor's note: Don Sims wrote this story for TRAINS magazine in 1961 but it was never published. In editing it for this issue of CLASSIC TRAINS, we have retained the original text's present tense.

Say you're in a responsible position with a railroad. How do you justify the expenditure of 20 million of your company's hard-earned dollars? It may seem strictly academic to most people, but somewhere along the line, someone or a collection of someones has to make the decision. And it may come hard.

New and more powerful diesel locomotives? Perhaps; they're logical and they earn back the investment in a relatively short time. Specialty freight cars such as mechanical reefers, or perhaps some roller-bearing piggyback flats? Shippers smile at this form of capital expenditure on the part of a carrier, and the results look cheery in publicity releases.

But then you might be a railroad like the Santa Fe, possessing the longest single U.S. transcontinental run, a 2,200-mile-plus main line that already cards streamliners in 39¾ hours and makes third-morning delivery possible on the fastest freights.

In that case, you bet your money on some 44 miles of surveys and proposals having to do with Arizona real estate.



At left, an eastward freight on the old line passes men and equipment constructing the new right of way at what would become Williams Junction. Above, deep cuts on the new line helped keep the grade at 1 percent.

Left, Kansas State Historical Society; above, Donald Sims



Four F7s ease a California-bound train of reefers downgrade on the original 1883 line between Supai and Welch in a 1950s publicity photo.

Santa Fe

The finished product, Santa Fe's line relocation between Crookton and Williams Junction, might be colloquially described as just plain *Wow!* It is super railroading in all the sense that recent technology can supply, and if anyone thinks the long stretches of gently curved track and the lack of dramatic scenery imply it was an easy job, he's dead wrong. The Arizona high country with its lava underpinnings is not easily dealt with.

You don't cast a few million dollars about without ample reason, and for a railroad to spend that kind of money, there must be something of a bottleneck there, and this is precisely the story.

ARIZONA BOTTLENECK

The Santa Fe's Albuquerque Division is a long-haul operation, stretching from the Colorado River at Needles, Calif., across approximately 580 miles of high-

density railroad to Albuquerque and Belen, N.Mex. On the east end, passenger trains course onward via Albuquerque and Raton Pass, while the low-grade freight route passes through Belen and on east via Amarillo, Texas.

To understand the importance of the Albuquerque Division, consider that across it moves tonnage that generates 49.3 percent of Santa Fe's gross freight revenue.

The diesel long ago dispensed with the 149-mile eastbound helper district from Needles to Seligman, Ariz. East of Seligman, though, was a few dozen miles of undulating country that represented the most restrictive territory for freight from Barstow clear through to Chicago. Starting from Seligman, the area was one of tough terrain, through which ran a double-track line that was frequently separated because in effect it was two different railroads, constructed at different times.

East of Williams, the rails of the Third District are reasonably fast, flowing through rolling land that becomes more stable as it ends at Winslow. Beyond division headquarters at Winslow is one of the fastest bits of iron around, the Second District, which cards three eastbound streamliners at an average of 72.7 mph for its 127-mile length, along



A 1944 photo shows an eastbound freight on the horseshoe curve west of Welch. FT diesel 126 is on the point, while across the horseshoe, a steam helper pushes behind the caboose.

Charles W. Lindenberg



In another 1950s company photo illustrative of the conditions on the old alignments, F7s roll reefers through the horseshoe curve east of Glead.

Santa Fe

with a westward fleet led by the *San Francisco Chief's* 74.8-mph average. Into this generally high-speed artery was thrown 50 miles of line that necessitated helper engines and slow running for all classes of trains.

During a period when railroads handled 70 to 80 percent of intercity freight, the imposition of slow track was not the handicap it is now, when third morning Chicago–Pacific Coast freights are a daily habit for several carriers. Not counting the many other factors involved, the saving of over one hour of running time per freight train by eliminating the bottleneck was a tempting consideration to be put before the operating department.

The time savings could be achieved by getting trains off the slow-speed track. Westbounds were bogged down on 19 miles of curves, many as sharp as 10 degrees, mandating 15–20 mph maximum speed for freight, 20–30 mph for first-class runs. In addition, a narrow tunnel, built with the original line in

1883, caused westbound oversized loads to be moved against traffic on the eastward main, which opened in 1911.

Nor was the eastward iron any picnic, since it contained a 1.8 percent ruling grade from Ash Fork to Supai, necessitating helpers on most freights.

The westward track was curvaceous to the tune of 4,614 degrees, while the eastward track contained 3,490 degrees of circular motion.

In lieu of what existed, a proposal detailed what a maximum 1 percent grade, a similar figure of curvature, and modern signaling techniques could accomplish. Succumbing to logic, Santa Fe amputated the gnarled and crooked limb and replaced it with a vastly superior appendage.

DISPATCHING WITH TCS

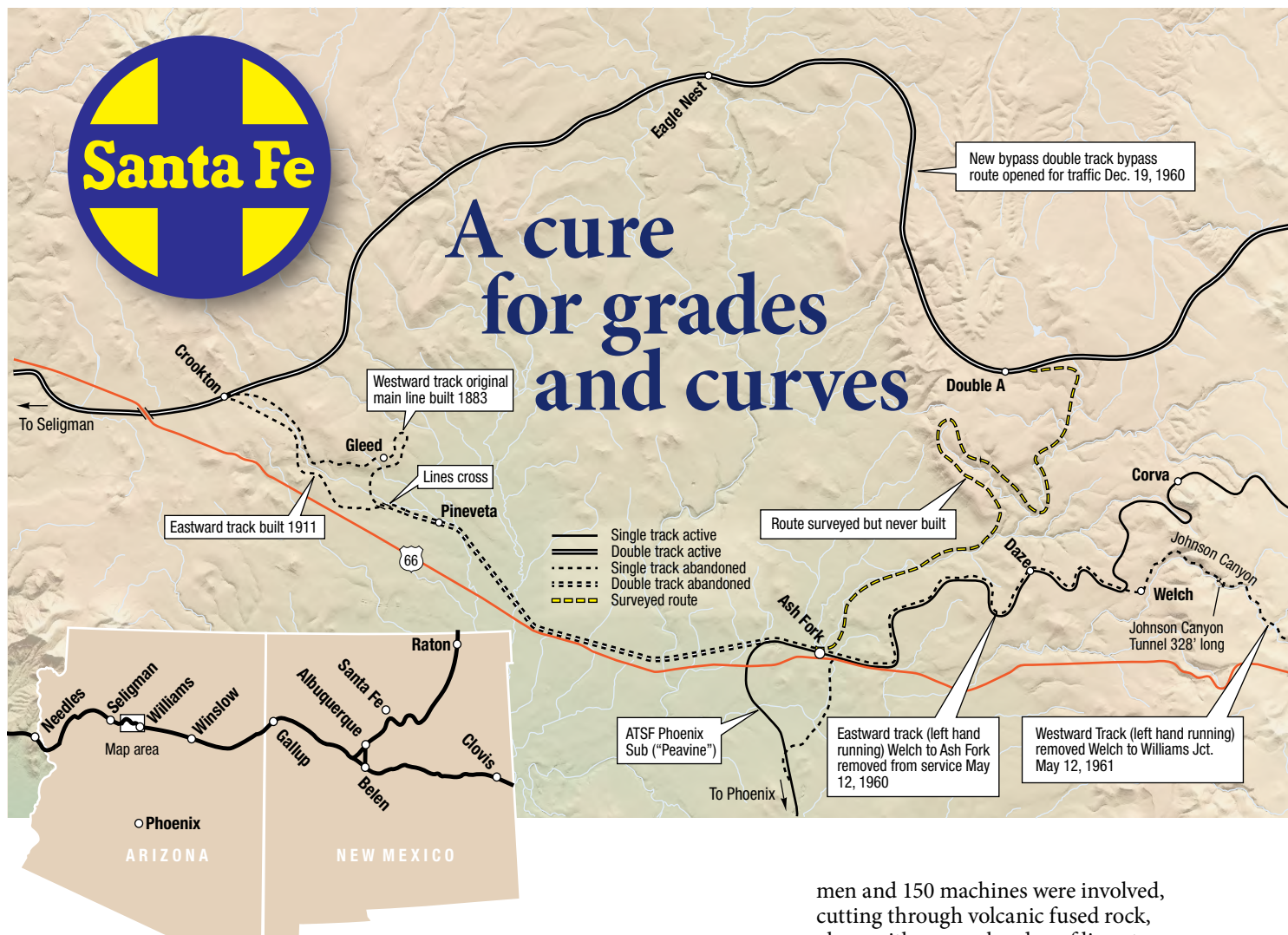
A condensed yet illuminating tale of modern railroading can be had in a few moments at division headquarters in

Winslow, site of the dispatching office, a newly renovated room in which the smell of fresh paint is still evident. In a small cubicle is a common railroad sight these days — a man and a machine. Unlike the green color of earlier control machines, the form in the center of this room is predominantly black, with an etched-silver track diagram accented by small indicator lights.

A flashing lunar white indicates that a route is being established, and within a few minutes amber track-occupancy lights shift from the upper of two parallel track lines onto the lower, advance past a similar set of lights on the upper track, and then blink back up to their original course.

Behind the little lights was this reality: 2,800 tons of symbol freight took a crossover, passed a slower train of 5,500 tons moving in the same direction, and returned via a second crossover to its original track a few miles later.

They call this TCS, for Traffic Control



System, and it represents a miniaturized advancement of the Centralized Traffic Control theory. Where a CTC board capable of handling several hundred miles of railroad might be spread into three or four panels about the dispatcher, TCS can do the same job in a single panel. And if you're thinking the Winslow machine doesn't really accomplish much because it controls only 44 miles, then you must look to the blank space around it. Projected for future work, the small panel to the right of the current diagram will carry the balance of Third District track, while above it is space for the entire Kingman District. In short, this single panel will someday control 291 miles of double-track railroad.

Unlike older machines for push-button dispatching, TCS is built about a central console, thus eliminating separate levers for each switch and signal on the track diagram. And particularly unlike most installations is Santa Fe's method of linking machine and field units —

microwave does the trick so there are no wires between Winslow and the line feed at Seligman. A pick-up station at this latter point feeds impulses to line points via a normal wire circuit.

In practice, TCS extends a few miles on either side of the line change, covering from the west end of Seligman, to Maine, 12 miles east of Williams Junction.

Skipping from a schematic model board to the real thing is certainly a revelation. The multi-colored lamps and straight-ruled track diagram give a compressed glimpse of operations, but nothing of topography.

WHAT \$20 MILLION BUYS

If you're impressed by statistics, then contemplate this: Beginning in May 1959, construction contractor Morrison-Knudsen moved something like 11 million cubic yards of material, involving a weight of 8½ million tons of rock and 10½ million tons of sandstone and limestone. During construction, almost 600

men and 150 machines were involved, cutting through volcanic fused rock, along with an overburden of limestone.

At one point, in order to maintain a maximum of 1 percent gradient, crews excavated a 2-mile cut with a maximum depth of 115 feet. Material removed from cuts was used to create numerous 30- and 40-foot-high fills.

With the work of grading completed, Santa Fe track gangs composed of Navajo Indians moved in. These were no maul-swinging gandy dancers, but crews familiar with the work of machinery that performs quicker and more uniformly, if less dramatically, than traditional track-laying techniques. And the 136-lb. rail had but little resemblance other than shape to the steel laid in 1883 and 1911. Santa Fe's line relocation is laid in 1,440-foot sections of welded rail, fabricated in Winslow and moved to the job site via strings of flatcars.

Effective with the Albuquerque Division timetable dated December 19, 1960, the 44 miles of new railroad was open for business.

For Santa Fe passengers, the most apparent element of the line change is a



smartly designed structure of glass and stone at the eastern juncture of old and new alignments. The new line meant that transcontinental trains would bypass Williams, so the railroad put up new facilities 3½ miles to the east, located incongruously in the midst of a stand of pine trees. Williams Junction is one of the more unusual of modern rail stations by virtue of its backwoods locale.

By day Williams Junction is quiet, its pulse geared to the passage of Nos. 7 and 8, Santa Fe's 20-plus-car mail trains, and No. 19, the Chicago–Los Angeles *Chief*. At night the woods come alive, with 11 first-class trains between dusk and dawn. This includes the road's entourage of streamliners, plus a pair of Phoenix connections (which use the old line between Williams Junction and Ash Fork) and the local Grand Canyon connection in summer months.

Passengers laying over at the Williams Junction station can listen in on a transcontinental railroad hard at work. All trains in the area are equipped with two-way radio, a communication system whose vocal strains are sometimes discernible from the operator's open bay. A



Led by class unit No. 900, four new SD24s swing a westbound train off a fill, past the cross-overs at Perrin, and into a deep cut. It's 1961, and the line relocation is less than a year old.

Two photos, Donald Sims



The Mid-Century Modern-style depot at Williams Junction, east end of the relocation, welcomes westbound mail train 7, led by Alco PA No. 60.

static-punctuated “highball” ringing in as an eastbound freight clears Seligman yard limits, or the questioning conversation between engine and caboose about a suspected hot box, are frequently infused into a normal pattern of domestic conversation.

East of Williams Junction, TCS extends to Maine, beyond which automatic block signals preside. Just west of the station, the line relocation swings to the right, dropping downhill slightly through a rock cut, while the original line heads toward Ash Fork and Phoenix.

The two tracks of the old line between Ash Fork and Crookton are slated for complete removal, while Ash Fork–Williams Junction will see one track retained for Phoenix trains. The track to be removed is the original 1883 survey through Johnson Canyon, the one with the narrow tunnel.

One’s first impression of the line relocation, particularly at the east end, is one of skepticism. If the object were to circumnavigate mountainous railroading, then it appears that Santa Fe’s efforts missed the mark. Deeper inspection reveals the full picture.

The line may seem unduly burdened with curves, given the capabilities of modern engineering. Then one discovers that arcs never exceed 1-degree maximum curvature. Almost 3,200 degrees of curvature — nearly nine full circles — were eliminated in building the new line.

A train, be it first class or extra freight, really doesn’t operate across the new roadbed in the usual sense of perception. It seemingly flows, something like a liquid in a tube. Welded rail is responsible for part of this feeling, while the capability of slide rule and earth mover adds the final touch. Banked curves are indiscernible from short stretches of tangency, and only a freight train with its attendant problems of slack control will move a little jerkily.

Speed boards denote a steady overall maximum of 60 mph for freight, 90 for passenger, though right now first-class trains are held to 80. It will probably be a few months before the full 90 is permitted, since it’s expected the virgin roadbed will settle slightly, then have a final layer of ballast added for programmed maximum speed.

Bidirectional signaling creates a two-

way street out of each track, but for practical reasons and perhaps from past habit, left-hand running is the common mode of operation east of Seligman. In part, topography of the old line created this pattern — the 1911-built track, with its easier gradients for eastbounds, lies to the north of the original track — since grade conditions caused left-hand operations there and the theme was carried on beyond it.

VIEW FROM THE CAB

At about 10 a.m. on a Saturday morning, eastbound symbol freight BTX brakes to a halt at Seligman, its four big road-switchers coming to idle position after a 149-mile uphill trip from Needles, Calif. BTX is a Bakersfield–Texas regular, today hauling 3,544 tons of freight train across several states. Electro-Motive SD24s (Santa Fe’s 900 class) and Alco RSD15s (800 class) in groups of four or five are taking over such runs from EMD F7s in five- or six-unit sets. The new units are programmed for Barstow–Kansas City service on symbol freights.

Seligman as a crew-change point

fades into a routine along with similar towns like Needles, Winslow, Gallup, Belen, and Clovis across Santa Fe's long trail. But 9 miles east of Seligman, the railroad is not routine, not at least until the sense of newness wears away from the welded rail that starts at Crookton.

BTX is under way just as soon as one crew can be substituted for another, and a radio can inform the engineer that a full complement is aboard. At milepost 419.5, a station sign reads CROOKTON and the noiseless quality of welded rail is first known. Off to the right lie two rusting tracks, the old main line waiting to be salvaged.

Even with four 2,400 h.p. units, BTX doesn't exactly rush up the steady 1 percent grade that dominates most of the line change. But it will cover the distance in a lot less time than on the old line, and it won't require a helper locomotive.

Between Crookton and Williams Junction, there are three sets of cross-overs, at Eagle Nest, Doublea, and Perrin. Each of these has a short setout track, but otherwise the new line is devoid of sidings. They're not needed, since each main track serves as both high iron and runaround as circumstances dictate.

Curiously enough, when Santa Fe first ran proposals on its line relocation, it dusted off the original circa 1880 surveys. Early locating engineer Lewis Kingman had considered several paths west of Williams, but was swayed by a southerly route because of important mining activity and a desire to run the line down Johnson Canyon, where water for steam locomotives might be easier to obtain.

Additionally, the route Kingman selected avoided much of the tough volcanic malpais and lava that modern blasting methods can cope with, but which were insurmountable during the late 19th century.

A patchwork of colored rock, much of



An SD24 quartet rides over a rock fill typical of those found throughout the new alignment.

it red in hue, as is normal in northern Arizona, enlivens the walls of the new line's many cuts.

East of Eagle Nest lies a 12-mile stretch of relatively open country, although even here several cuts are required to keep the grade from exceeding 1 percent. By Perrin, 10 miles farther east, the two tracks have immersed themselves in a veritable continuum of cuts, many of the them more than a half-mile in length, with their walls topping out at 50 feet or more.

From Perrin, it's 10 miles of steady 1 percent up to Williams Junction. At one point, the line passes under a natural gas pipeline that bridges over a cut and returns to a subterranean pathway.

Near Williams Junction, a long, high fill takes the new line over Santa Fe's single-track Grand Canyon District then, a mile later, U.S. Route 66. Off the fill the tracks plunge into a lightly wooded area,

finally emerging at Williams Junction via a long, shallow cut.

The brief flirtation with habitation near Williams is out of step with much of the new line. For the most part it has been laid through sparsely settled country, with only a few ranch homes and dirt roads for company. Apart from the welded rail and searchlight signals, this must have been how Santa Fe looked many years ago — a time when trains were run with telegraph and flimsies, a time when oily engine smoke drifted over the land of the Navajo and Apache.

Perhaps someday the future will look back on the present with similar thoughts in mind, viewing what has just transpired as a period of antiquity. In the meantime 44 miles of super railroad looks darn good. And the \$20 million that was spent is being earned back at a rate of \$1 million per year, just in case any stockholders are listening. ■



State-of-the-art railroading, circa 1961: Modern tri-level auto-racks sail along a fill and over a local road on the new line north of Williams.

Three photos, Donald Sims

By rail to the Grand Canyon

The former Santa Fe line north of Williams, Ariz., ferries passengers to a great National Park • **By William P. Diven**



An F40PH, FPB4, and generator car lead a train of mostly depowered Budd RDCs from the Canyon at Red Lake, 10 miles out of Williams, in 2007.

Three photos, William P. Diven



Mikado 4960, extensively rebuilt during 1993–96, rolls south at Red Lake in 2013. Heavily reliant on steam initially, GCR has sidelined its two 2-8-0s and runs 4960 only occasionally.

Presidents and potentates, Legionnaires and Boy Scouts, vacationing families and partying Shriners once flocked to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon on the Santa Fe Railway.

One — and for decades two — daily passenger trains departed Williams, Ariz., on Santa Fe's main line, hauling guests from Fred Harvey's Fray Marcos Hotel and Pullmans switched out of through trains. Specials in multiple sections crowded the stub tracks at Grand Canyon station, a short, steep walk from El Tovar, the Harvey hotel perched since

1905 on the rim of the mile-deep gorge.

The Santa Fe quit carrying people to the canyon nearly 50 years ago and even called in a salvage outfit to rip up the rails. Yet, remarkably, daily trains — sometimes behind steam — still make the 65-mile run from Williams as riders relax in streamlined comfort.

The independent Santa Fe & Grand Canyon Railroad opened 45 miles of track and a stagecoach connection to the canyon in 1899, cutting the three-day trip to 5½ hours. Bankruptcy ceded completion to bondholder Santa Fe, which

launched 3-hour runs all the way to the Canyon on the rebranded Grand Canyon Railway in 1901.

Passenger counts peaked at 70,000 in 1927, not incidentally the first year more automobile than rail travelers entered the park. As late as 1953, traffic spiked at 55,000, inflated by 20,000 Boy Scouts aboard National Jamboree specials.

Canyon trains withered to summer-only service several years before the Santa Fe's 1960 line relocation demoted Williams to branchline backwater, replaced by the new Williams Junction station hidden in the forest 3 miles east. Daily service succumbed in 1968, and doom seemed at hand when scrapper Railroad Resources, Inc. appeared five years later.

Instead, Railroad Resources went bust trying to revive the line. Investor Max Biegert then claimed his collateral, 20 miles of track, and bought the rest including the Fray Marcos. After months of herculean effort, his crew dispatched their inaugural train behind ex-Lake Superior & Ishpeming 2-8-0 No. 18 on September 17, 1989, the 88th anniversary of the first run of the original GCR.

Immediately the new GCR reduced the vehicle traffic choking the park, and

it soon explored laying track to Tusayan, the town just outside the South Rim entrance. The National Park Service, however, opted for bigger parking lots, restricted road access, and free shuttle buses. GCR figures its 124,000 passengers in 2013 represented 50,000 fewer vehicles entering the park, which drew 4.5 million visitors that year.

GCR operates under the banner of Xanterra Parks and Resorts, a Fred Harvey descendant controlled by Philip Anschutz, past owner of the Denver & Rio Grande Western and Southern Pacific railroads. Three former Amtrak F40PHs (Nos. 237, 239, and 295), resplendent in silver, gold, and black, handle most trains, with five Montreal Locomotive Works-built Alco FPA4 cab and booster units in reserve. Former Burlington Route 2-8-2 No. 4960, fueled by recycled vegetable oil, is carded for nine runs in 2015. The three other GCR-owned steam locomotives sit idle: No. 18, now on the San Luis & Rio Grande in Colorado; No. 29, another ex-LS&I 2-8-0, parked at the Grand Canyon; and ex-Spokane, Portland & Seattle 2-8-2 No. 539, which never



FPA4 6793 (ex-CN/VIA/Potomac Eagle) was the last FA-family diesel built, in 1959; GCR activated three such MLW cab units and two boosters during 1991–2001. Ready to depart Williams in 2003, the historic unit wears GCR's dark green and gold, since replaced by silver-gold-black.

ran on the GCR, displayed at Williams.

Anschutz brought four dome cars of Hill Lines ancestry to the property, and his company poured millions into rehabbing the 1995 hotel, trackside restaurant and former Fray Marcos Hotel, the current Williams station. Biegert's 1920s ex-

Southern Pacific "Harriman" commuter cars appear infrequently as passengers take in the high plains and tall pines from Budd-built streamlined equipment including coaches converted from Rail Diesel Cars, long and short domes, and an observation car's open platform. ■

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Memorable night at Winston Tower

A laboring Burlington 2-10-2 on a coal drag creates a lasting impression

Senior Editor Dave Ingles' piece on Winston Tower in Winter 2012 CLASSIC TRAINS reminded me of the time I spent there around 1950. Winston was an interlocking tower, located where the Burlington Route's coal-hauling Beardstown Division crossed the Chicago–St. Louis lines of the Wabash and Illinois Central a couple of miles south of Litchfield in downstate Illinois. Winston's main function was to guide CB&Q's coal drags and empty hoppers safely between the speeding manifests and passenger trains of the major north-south roads. It was a mechanical interlocking tower with 30-odd back-bending levers in constant use. The delivery of written train orders was seldom done.

I spent many a day visiting a close friend and fellow railfan in Litchfield. We spent hours at Winston photographing passing trains and helping the opera-



Fat-boilered Burlington 2-10-2 No. 6101 nears Winston with 85 coal loads on June 9, 1950.

tor, who frequently left the tower to visit an uptown cafe. We were there so much that the dispatchers seldom questioned our presence.

One particular night stands out in my memory. The regular operator told us there was nothing due for the remainder

of his shift except for a northbound Burlington coal drag, and we should give it the board when the annunciator bell sounded. With that he headed for a hot meal at an uptown beanery.

My pal and I sat on the window ledge enjoying the quiet moonlit night when



CB&Q 2-10-4 (a "Colorado" type on the Q) No. 6319 hammers across the Wabash and IC diamonds and past Winston Tower with a southbound freight on September 30, 1952.

Two photos, Joe Collias

suddenly a pinpoint of yellow light appeared to the south, several miles distant. It grew in intensity, as did the sound of stack exhaust. Burlington's fat-boilered 2-10-2s had an exhaust that sounded like none other. It reminded me of a German band warming up. In the clear night air it became more distinct, interrupted only by deep bass whistling at the infrequent grade crossings. It was almost hypnotic until the annunciator broke the spell and we jumped to clear the interlocking.

As the 2-10-2 hammered over the multiplicity of rails, we gave a high sign to the fireman silhouetted in the light of the open firebox door. The pounding of loaded hopper cars seemed endless until the waycar appeared and we acknowledged the swing of the conductor's lantern. The operator finally returned, along with his relief man, and we departed. It was an experience that I'll never forget.

— Joe Collias

Trains MAGAZINE

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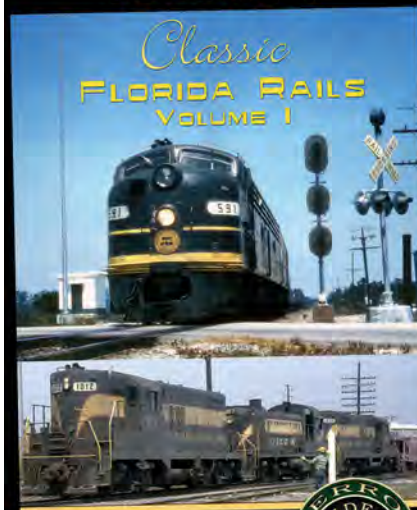
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THE WAY IT WAS

Nights on the Nightingale

Recalling rides on the Omaha Road's overnight train to Minneapolis

In the late 1940s, my hometown of Omaha, Nebr., was one of the busiest railroad centers on the continent. Passenger trains of nine railroads converged on the two main downtown stations, Union and Burlington.

Despite all that activity, I didn't get to ride those trains very often. Once or twice I may have been allowed to take the train on my own to visit relatives in Lincoln, barely an hour away, or Fremont, even closer, but most such travel was in the family car. In high school, however, I had the opportunity to attend a summer camp in Minnesota for a week or two, and that meant traveling a long distance on my own for the first time. It also meant taking the train to Minneapolis. This, of course, was a Big Deal.

In the early 1950s, the Chicago & North Western ran passenger trains between the two cities over its affiliate Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha, informally called "The Omaha Road." It wasn't a top-of-the-line service: two trains each way daily, stopping just about everywhere. On average, the 377-mile trip took about 10 hours. At Minneapolis, a bus would pick up the out-of-town campers for the drive to one of Minnesota's many lakes named Long — this one near Aitkin, some 140 miles north of the Twin Cities. The bus would depart Minneapolis in the morning, which meant, of course, that I had to take the overnight *Nightingale*.

Now, the class act of intercity travel at the time was the Burlington Route with its fleet of *Zephyrs*, a name some people tended to give to any shiny, streamlined train, whether on the CB&Q or not. These trains had plush seats, a full dining car, big windows, maybe even air-conditioning or one of those new dome cars. The *Nightingale* was at the other end of the spectrum: a few old coaches (our family was not wealthy, so a sleeper was out of the question), no diner, and what was probably a well-worn steam locomotive on the point; I never went up to

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look. The coaches were pretty dismal — rather run-down and only moderately clean. Forget air-conditioning; if it was stuffy, you opened a window.

The *Nightingale* left Omaha Union Station around 10:30 p.m. There were only a few other passengers, so I had no trouble finding a seat to stretch out on. The coach was old enough to have a gentlemen's smoking lounge, with long, hard benches that at least allowed one (if the conductor was agreeable) to lie down properly. Amenities consisted of a kid, or maybe it was an old man, pushing a cart with newspapers, cigarettes, and some candy bars.

After leaving Omaha and crossing the Missouri River, the train stopped twice in Council Bluffs, Iowa, once at Council Bluffs Transfer for mail and express and once at the passenger station, then worked its way up the C&NW line hamlet-by-hamlet to Sioux City. The candy butcher got off here. The 25-minute stop gave one just enough time to go into the station cafe for something to eat.

Now think about this for a minute. You're a high-school kid on his own,



Two C&NW E7s depart Minneapolis with CStPM&O's *North American*, the daytime companion to the *Nightingale* on the Minneapolis-Omaha run, shortly before noon on August 4, 1950.

Bob Borchering

miles from home, in a nearly deserted train station at midnight. You could be forgiven for feeling that the whole scene was just a bit creepy. You go into the cafe, which is about to close, and all you can get is a cheese sandwich. That's what it is,

no more and no less. One square slice of American cheese between two pieces of stale, dry, white bread. No mayo, no lettuce, no nothing. For the 25 cents they charged, I could've got a decent meal at any Harkert's back in Omaha.

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THE WAY IT WAS

But the other thing about being 16 or so is that almost every new experience is still an adventure. So you figure, what the hell, this is all part of the deal. And you're beginning to learn that late-night people are actually pretty friendly.

Back on the *Nightingale*, I managed to choke down the sandwich (on later trips I made sure to bring something from home). Soon, the overhead lights — never very bright to begin with — were turned off, and I could peer out the window into miles of nowhere as we made our way through the flat Iowa and Minnesota farmlands. The feeling of isolation was palpable. A light in a farmhouse some distance away at first only intensified the loneliness, but it also brought an oddly comforting sense that even out here, there were people safe at home. To this day, whenever I take an overnight train, this blend of feelings comes back.

I tried valiantly to get some sleep as we plodded north, stopping every so often at

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settlements like Blencoe and Grogan, Salix and Mudbaden — then as now the barest tiny white circles on a road map.

Eventually we arrived at Minneapolis around 8:30 a.m. The bus came, we went to the camp, and had quite a good time. (Among other things, this is where I learned to row a boat and paddle a canoe.) All too soon, the camp session was over, and the bus delivered us back to the railroad station.

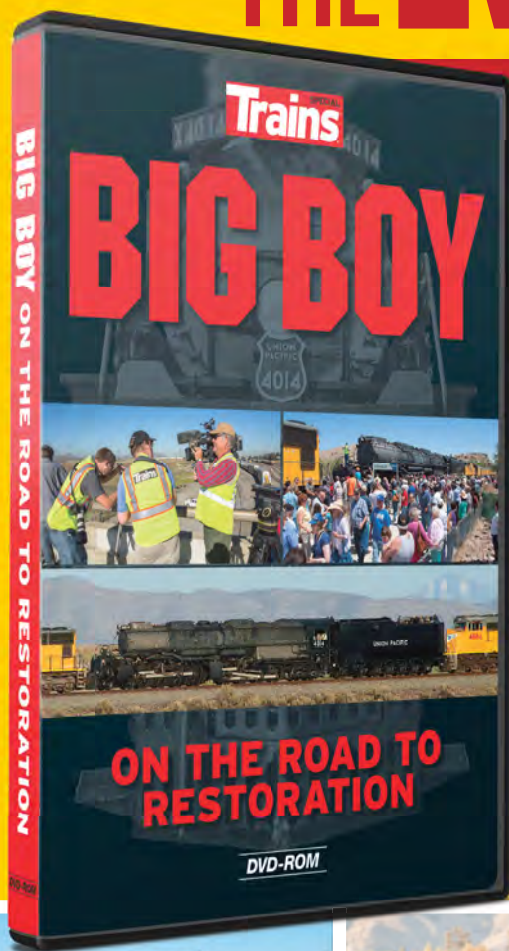
My return trip was on the day train, which was pretty much like the *Nightingale*, but with scenery. It went by the somewhat grandiose name of *North American*, probably because it supplied a through sleeper to the Union Pacific's *City of Los Angeles*. Otherwise it was just another Omaha Road local.

I took this trip two or three summers in a row. And yet, despite being able to see what was going on, I remember almost nothing about the return to Omaha. What sticks in the memory are those somewhat eerie, evocative midnight runs on the *Nightingale*. — J. M. Graetz

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‘Never spend a dime when a nickel will do’

A freight agent in Virginia gets a lesson in the L&N's frugal ways



Louisville & Nashville agent Theo Rowlett watches from the ground as the cabooses of two freights pass at Appalachia, Va., in February 1974.

Two photos, Ron Flanary

Until it finally closed without much notice or fanfare on April 15, 1982, the Louisville & Nashville Railroad maintained an agency in my old hometown of Appalachia, Va. The first station — a repurposed wooden boxcar — was opened in 1891, so the L&N had human representation in Appalachia for nearly 91 years. This spot on the L&N's Cumberland Valley Division was of sufficient importance to the L&N to warrant both a passenger station and freight house, both of substantial brick and concrete construction. As the steam era and passenger service faded away, the remaining employee — an agent/operator — was housed in the freight station, with the depot becoming vacant.

Appalachia was an important railroad town. Southern Railway's Appalachia Division yard was in the west end, and coal-hauling short line Interstate Railroad was headquartered just 2 miles north in the community of Andover. Until passenger service on all three roads was abolished at various times, the L&N depot was listed as “Union Station” in the *Official Guide*. All of this activity made for a bustling little railroad center.

A long succession of agents worked

the L&N job at Appalachia, but in the early 1970s, the slot was held by Theo Rowlett. From his office in the freight station, Theo handled all interchange business between the L&N and the two other railroads, REA Express shipments, and — on occasion — train orders. Most operators used a manual typewriter to bang out train orders in duplicate, and the model of choice on the L&N was the Underwood.

After years of faithful service, though, the typewriter at Appalachia was pretty much shot. The metal typefaces had been pounded with such force for so long — necessary to produce a readable image on up to five copies of a single train order, with carbons — that some letters were hardly readable, particularly on the underlying copies.

Knowing a misinterpreted word or numeral might mean life or death to the train crews relying on the content of the train order, Theo drafted a handwritten message to the chief dispatcher at Corbin, Ky., placed it in a company mail envelope, and left it in the bill box for pickup by the next northbound freight: “The typewriter at Appalachia is worn out. Many of the typed letters and nu-

merals are not legible and cannot be used to type train orders. Request a replacement be sent as soon as possible. Theo Rowlett, Agent”

In its long and illustrious history, the L&N's most influential chief executive was Milton H. Smith, who presided over the company's growth into a major system during a 30-year period in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The L&N was known for being extremely conservative, but its shareholders were always pleased. The company even continued to pay dividends through the Great Depression (with the exception of the darkest year, 1932). Smith's frugality was well documented, and he reportedly was fond of noting that the company should “never spend a dime when a nickel will do.” That spirit still prevailed in many parts of the L&N system more than 50 years after Smith's retirement.

Days turned into weeks, but there was no word on how Corbin would respond to Theo's request. In the meantime, it was business as usual with the elderly Underwood. But, on one particular morning when Theo arrived for work, there was a red L&N 40-foot boxcar spotted against the freight station plat-

form on the back leg of the wye. A check of the bill box revealed it was "company material," and was left there by the southbound night freight early in the morning. At the time, a bridge-and-building crew was redecking a bridge north of town, so Theo assumed the car held bridge timbers, hardware, or something else needed for that job.

Three days went by until the bridge gang foreman dropped by to have Theo send a message on an unrelated matter. "Were you expecting some company material?" Theo asked. When the foreman answered in the negative they both walked out to the freight platform, and slid open the door on the boxcar.

There in the middle of the car — braced by several two-by-fours nailed to the floor to keep it from sliding around — was an old manual Underwood typewriter, the same model as the one in Theo's office. The replacement had arrived, all the way from headquarters in Louisville! There wasn't another thing in the car — just the typewriter. Nevertheless, the car had been listed in the train's consist from a few days before as a "load."



Theo Rowlett sits at the agent's desk in L&N's Appalachia freight station in April 1982.

Technically, that was correct, but the weight of the typewriter surely didn't test the combined tractive effort of the four Alco RS3s on train 855, the freight that had brought the car all the way from Corbin, where it had arrived earlier on a through freight from Louisville.

Theo retrieved the prize and then called the chief dispatcher's office for in-

structions on what to do with the old typewriter. "I don't know, Theo. I guess you'd better just put it in the boxcar and route it back to Louisville." That night, a northbound freight picked up the "loaded" boxcar and the great typewriter swap at Appalachia was complete.

Never spend a dime when a nickel will do. — Ron Flanary

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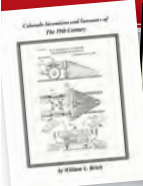
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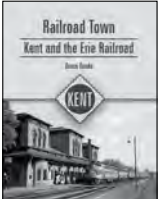
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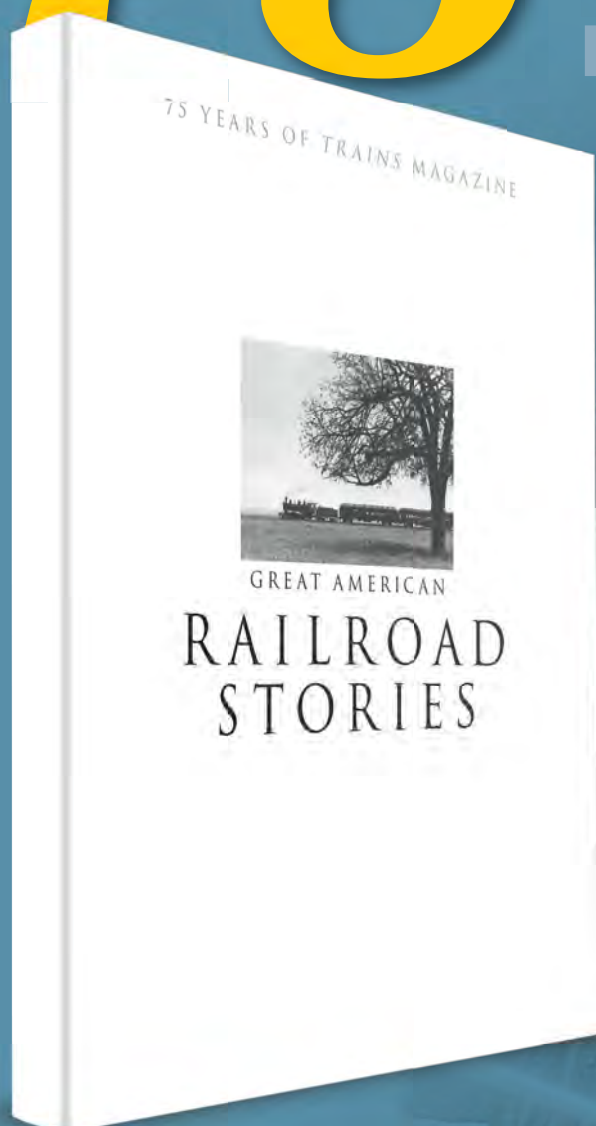
Railroad Town: Kent and the Erie Railroad
By Bruce Dzeda, Kent Historical Society Press

This book traces the history of the Erie Railroad in Kent, Ohio, from its inception as the A&GW and the profound effect it had on the economy of the city. It's filled with photos from early steam to diesels; a timeline tracks Marvin Kent's vision through the final days of passenger service. It paints a vivid picture of the immigrants who settled in Kent, and the social impact they had on the city. 50 pages, profusely illustrated with photos and maps, \$25 postpaid to US addresses.



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First ride with Dad

Two years made a world of difference for an engineer's young son

My dad, John T. Long Sr., was a Pennsylvania Railroad engineer out of Richmond, Ind. In 1967, when I was about to turn 5 and he was off duty, he took me up on a pair of GP9s that would push a freight north to Lynn. However, I wanted nothing to do with the noisy locomotives and started to cry. That ended our cab ride and we went home.

Two years later, in August '69, the PRR had become Penn Central and I was a more mature 7-year-old. Mom, my older brother, and my sister boarded Chicago-Cincinnati train 70, which arrived Richmond at 5:35 p.m. Soon we departed, with Dad at the throttle and the rest of us back in the train. Two hours later we were pulling into Cincinnati Union Terminal.

There was lots of activity at CUT. Mom took my brother, sister, and me up into the terminal building to look at the beautiful murals. Meanwhile, our train's single E unit had been cut off so Dad

could take it around the loop track north of the station.

After a while, my brother asked Mom if we could go back down to the platform. A friendly car inspector asked us if we were lost. We told him we were looking for our dad. He asked us who our dad was and my brother explained that he was the engineer on inbound train 70.

That broke the ice with the carman, who then told us his name was Cabbagehead and, yes, his hair looked like a head of black cabbage. It wasn't long before Dad and his E unit arrived, which he backed onto our outbound consist.

Cabbagehead and the rest of the carmen went to work coupling the air hoses and steam connections between the locomotive and train. Next thing I knew my brother walked up to the cab and asked Dad if we could ride the head end with him back to Richmond. Dad said, "Nah, you guys don't want to be up here.



The author's dad, John Long, runs a PC E7.

J. David Ingles, Edward R. Long collection

It's too hot, you'll get all dirty . . ." But my brother and I kept up the pressure and finally Dad gave in: "Aw, come on up."

About the only thing I remember from my first real cab ride is sitting on Dad's lap as he showed me how to move the throttle and blow the horn.

All too soon we were back at Richmond and riding home in Dad's old '55 Mercury with holes in the floorboards. My brother was fast asleep but I felt like a victor — no crying *this* time! Many more cab rides with Dad — my best buddy — followed, and I went on to a 28-year railroad career. — Edward R. Long

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MAGAZINE



David H. Cope, Krambles-Peterson Archive



David H. Cope, Krambles-Peterson Archive

Land of the *Liberty Bell Limiteds*

Lehigh Valley Transit Co. was primarily involved in city and suburban trolley operations in the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton area along the Lehigh River in eastern Pennsylvania. In 1903 LVT opened a standard-gauge interurban line from Allentown south to Chestnut Hill, where passengers could connect with Philadelphia streetcars for a long ride to center city. Philadelphia service was greatly improved in 1912 with the opening of a branch from Lansdale to Norristown and a connection to the third-rail interurban Philadelphia & Western; LVT cars ran on the P&W to 69th Street Terminal in Upper Darby, from which passengers rode the Market Street Elevated rapid transit line into town. Dubbed the “Liberty Bell Route” after that national symbol’s journey from Philadelphia to Allentown for safekeeping during the

Revolutionary War, the service was superior to that offered by the only competing steam road, the Reading. LVT closed its Chestnut Hill line in 1926, *Liberty Bell Limited* operation to 69th Street lasted until 1949, and Allentown–Norristown service was converted — with just 6 hours’ notice — to buses September 7, 1951. At left, a photo from the Trolley Bridge Road overpass near Coopersburg shows car 812, rebuilt from a deluxe charter/official car in 1921, southbound on a September 11, 1949, railfan special. At lower left, car 1008, one of 11 high-speed lightweights LVT picked up from the defunct Cincinnati & Lake Erie in 1938, parallels Reading electrified suburban trackage as it approaches the Norristown terminal in 1950. Below, ex-C&LE car 1007 is southbound beside the Reading’s Lansdale station in July 1950.



H. M. Stange, Krambles-Peterson Archive

In the next issue

Spring 2015 Edition



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Union Pacific "Mountain Type" F3 rebuilds on the *Butte Special*

The Shaughnessy Files

Miracle machines in 1944, B&M's FTs were tired old horses by 1957

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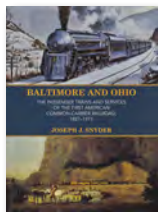
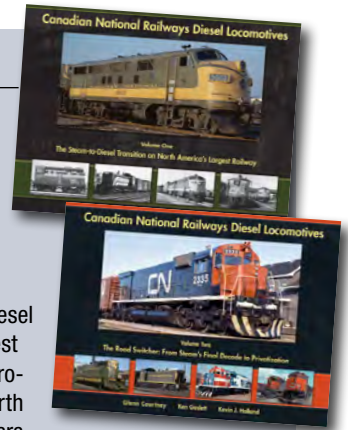
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READY TRACK Reviews of new products

FIRST OUT

Canadian National Railways Diesel Locomotives, Vols. 1 and 2
By Kevin J. Holland, Ken Goslett, and Glenn Courtney. Canadian National Railways Historical Association, in cooperation with Canada Science and Technology Museum, 252 Sandpiper Circle NW, Calgary, AB, Canada T3K 3T9; www.cnlines.ca; 11 x 8½ inches, hardcover, 176 (Vol. 1) and 192 (Vol. 2) pages, \$54.95 each.

It is appropriate that a definitive, scholarly work on the diesel locomotives of what for many years was North America's largest railway system took two volumes and more than 20 years to produce. For students of CN's history, the wait was more than worth it. Volume 1 appeared in 2012 and Volume 2 in mid-2014. Messrs. Holland and Goslett authored Volume 1, subtitled "The Steam-to-Diesel Transition on North America's Largest Railway," and enlisted Mr. Courtney as a third author on Volume 2, "The Road Switcher: From Steam's Final Decade to Privatization." All three are accomplished authors, photographers, and historians. The dividing point is roughly 1960; CN's first internal-combustion rail vehicle dated from 1920, and privatization occurred in 1995, so eight decades are spanned. Reproduction of photos is superb, the majority in Volume 1 being black-and-white, naturally, but with sufficiently varied color in Volume 2, given CN's and its subsidiaries' many color schemes. The history of CN's and Grand Trunk Western's earliest motor cars and locomotives is especially valuable and very detailed. Both volumes include bibliographies and are fully indexed, easily exceeding the standard for "must have" status for students and historians of CN's vast network. — *J. David Ingles*



Baltimore and Ohio: The Passenger Trains and Services of America's First Common Carrier Railroad, 1827-1972

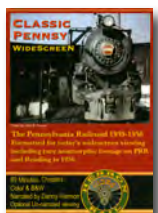
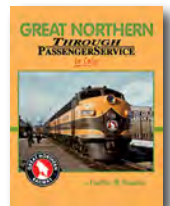
By Joseph J. Snyder. Juniper House Library Publications, 106 Ashley Dr., Shepardstown, WV 25443; (304) 876-3208; aphsr1@comcast.net. 9 x 12 inches, hardcover, 264 pages, \$85. Kindle e-book version from Amazon.com, \$9.99.

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Great Northern through Passenger Service, in Color

By Geoffrey H. Doughty. Morning Sun Books, 9 Pheasant Dr., Scotch Plains, NJ 07076; www.morningsunbooks.com; 8½ x 11 inches, hardcover, 128 pages, \$59.95.

Passenger train authority Geoff Doughty chronicles long-haul and intercity service on GN lines from the end of World War II into the early Amtrak era. Besides the *Empire Builder* and *Western Star*, Doughty looks at the *Internationals*, *Badger/Gopher*, and other regional trains. Although illustrated with a profusion of color photos ranging up to a full two pages in size, plus numerous brochures promoting GN trains, this is far more than a picture book. It's a substantial study of how a great railroad managed the gradual decline of the most visible aspect of its business. — *R.S.M.*



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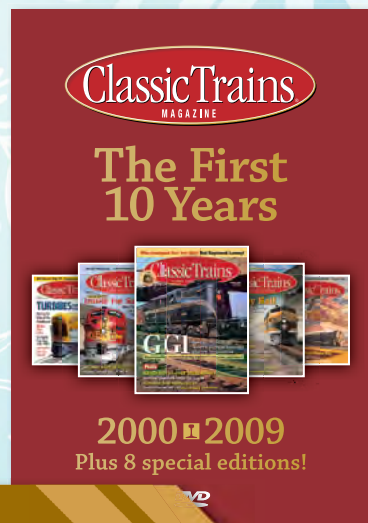
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B&O

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